PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES AS A FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT IN SELECTED NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS

BY

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BEING A DISSERTATION SUBMITTEDTO THE POST GRADUATE SCHOOL, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSATY, ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA) IN ENGLISH LANGUAGEIN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, NIGERIA

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation was written by me and it is a record and result of my research efforts. The work has not been presented anywhere in a previous application for a higher degree. All consulted authorities, sources and quotations in the research are well acknowledged by means of reference.

_____ _____

Tina Ndau Bwoganet Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES AS A FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT IN SELECTED NIGERIAN NEWSPAPRS by Tina Ndau Bwoganet meets the regulation governing the award of the degree of Master of Arts (English Language) in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the glory of the Almighty God.

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ABSTRACT

This work is a pragmatic analysis of congratulatory messages in selected Nigerian newspapers. It looked at how Pragmatics as a field of study, clarified written texts, that is congratulatory messages. It also analysed the language and pragmatic features of newspaper congratulatory messages. The data for the study came from three different Nigerian newspapers*: Daily Trust*, *Nigerian Tribune* and *Vanguard*. The data was collected from a media house and libraries in Kaduna and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria respectively. Congratulatory messages are literarily meant to express compliments but senders have used the avenue to achieve two motives; advertise and compliment. An eclectic use of Bach and Harnish's Mutual Contextual Belief (MCB), Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1965) Speech Acts Theory, and inference were used to analyse and explain how readers understood the hidden intentions contained in the messages and how the intentions were inferred through MCBs. Since the intentions and well wishes that the messages conveyed were tied to the illocutionary acts that were performed, the work adopted Austin and Searle's classification of speech or illocutionary acts to name the acts that were performed and how the acts conveyed the senders' intentions to the intended recipients and the general readership. The study reveals that context, inference alongside Mutual Contextual Beliefs play crucial roles in understanding senders' intentions and in interpreting the acts performed in the congratulatory messages. The study also revealed that the written congratulatory messages are to a great extent, a form of advertisement because of the features they posess such as; language of flattery and exaggeration, full addresses of the senders, photographs of both senders and intended recipients,senders' phone numbers and the adjectives used in describing the intended recipient(s). In addition,the study revealed that the messages were not just mere statements but conveyed several acts and mutual beliefs in them based on sender's choice of expression. They contain a lot of MCBs as revealed by the analysis because senders and readers of the messages share certain cultural, political, religious and social beliefs alongside a world view, language usage and communication. It is also revealed that the texts reflect world view and value system of both the sender(s) and the recipient(s).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The English language is the language that cuts across all regional boundaries throughout Nigeria and the world at large. It is the language of administration, education, mass media and literary communication. The Nigerian society is kept abreast of events due to the continuous flow of relevant information among its components. That is the vital role English language plays through the print media, newspapers precisely.

A congratulatory message sent through the newspaper can be considered as a strand of advertisement. To this end, advertising is a form of communication that is used to encourage, create awareness or persuade an audience (viewers, readers and listeners). Advertising messages are usually paid for by sponsors and viewed through various traditional media including mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor advertising or through the direct media such as blogs, websites and text messages. Press advertising describes advertising in printed medium such as newspapers, magazines or trade journal. This encompasses everything from the media with a very broad readership base, from major national newspapers to local newspapers. A form of press advertisement allows private individuals or companies to purchase a small, narrowly targeted advert for a low fee to advertise a product or service. Advertising is one of the activities that a company undertakes in order to boost sales. The language of advertisement has triggered off the need to examine its role, operation and effect on the target audience. The print media, especially the newspapers, have been used as a good medium to place different kinds of advertisement, including congratulatory messages, and have become a huge success today because many advertisers have adopted the newspapers as their preferred means of

communication. Usually, the acts of congratulating are written or spoken to express one's good intentions over another's success, achievement and the like. In the print media, the newspapers precisely, a page is bought and personalized, where these statements are usually written, accompanied by the receiver's picture and profile, and in some cases, the sender's picture and profile too.

The Linguistic Encyclopaedia states that the act of congratulating at the level of the media is associated with the European tradition. Historically speaking, the act can be traced to ancient times for instance during marriage, childbirth and related ceremonies, family members and friends gather together to orally congratulate the celebrant. Today in Nigeria, the newspapers have been adopted to a large extent as a traditional means of sending congratulatory messages. It also serves as a means of advertising both the senders and the receivers of these messages. These messages are usually written in the newspapers to create an impression in the minds of both the intended receiver and the general readership. The language usually use in writing these messages varies. While in some cases the language is simple and straight forward, in others it is high-sounding and not straight forward. The sentence structure is simple in some cases while in others it is complex. Most of these messages are lengthy and are designed to capture the interest of both the intended receiver and the other readers and create an impression of cheer in their minds. The style of writing these messages is usually meant to suit the occasion being celebrated that is birthdays, political achievements and so on. Well-wishers send congratulatory messages through the newspapers because they want to express themselves as well as communicate with the receiver of the message and other newspaper readers. These messages create a feeling of acknowledgement of the receiver's celebrated occasion. They also create a feeling of cheer in the minds of the intended receivers, and popularity of both the

receiver and the sender(s). These messages are written in different ways and sound differently. While some sound poetic, others sound proverbial or religious; but in some cases it is a combination of all. All of these depend on the choice of words of the sender or senders as the case may be.

In Nigeria today, many people have adopt the newspapers as a medium of sending different types of messages. In cases where people achieve or accomplish goals, well-wishers usually celebrate with them either verbally or in writing. Congratulatory messages are a medium of communication allowing well-wishers from far and near, all over the country to convey well wishes to a celebrated person or persons. The senders' names and profiles, and to some extent photographs, usually accompany the message(s) probably for personal reasons. Every advertisement, especially, that of congratulatory messages in newspapers, involves the use of language. Sometimes, if not all the time, when congratulatory messages are advertised, the aesthetic features of the contents capture the interest of the readers while the sender or advertiser may have a different motive behind placing the advert. It is the pragmatic features of these congratulatory messages, the obvious and hidden intentions of the senders of the messages, the beliefs that both the senders and the receivers of the messages share, and the inference drawn from the messages that this research will examine.

Pragmatic analyses have been carried out on language in sermons, cartoons, newspaper headlines, text messages and several other contexts such as; Bahago (1999), Gusau (2009), Barkindo (2013) and others. The present study takes a pragmatic approach to the study of the language used in selected congratulatory messages. It also analyzes the pragmatic features contained in congratulatory messages, the acts which the senders perform in these messages, the

beliefs they share, and the intentions of the senders or advertisers of these messages in newspapers.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Advertisement has become part of the human life; this is because as individuals go around performing their daily routine, they encounter different forms of adverts on the roads, on bill boards, on vehicles or via the electronic/print media. The aim of these adverts is solely to persuade and effectively communicate to the populace about goods and services using language and visual contents. Effective communication can be achieved only when language is used effectively to convey messages whether written or spoken. Yule (1997:127) states that "when we read or hear pieces of language, we normally try to understand not only what the words mean, but also what the writer or speaker of those words intended to convey".

Senders of newspaper congratulatory messages send to their well-wishes based on their intentions and relations. The messages in this form of advertisement might not be fully and rightly understood if readers are oblivious of the context and if both the senders and the readers of the messages do not share mutual belief yet they go ahead to use the newspaper as a medium instead of a medium that will personally and confidentially deliver the messages to the intended receivers. Why send the messages through the newspapers if not to advertize to an extent?

Any piece of information conveyed through the newspaper medium is directed towards giving information and creating awareness to the readership which is subsumed under advertisement. That does not live congratulatory messages out. Congratulatory messages are suppose to be personal messages, but senders chose the newspaper as a medium to convey these messages to their recipients. When these messages are written in newspapers, other readers get to read them because the messages contain a lot of information about their recipients, senders, and

to a very large extent, political issues at the federal, state and local government levels. The senders of the messages, aside expressing their goodwill over their recipients' achievement(s) go ahead to perform several speech acts under the guise of a congratulatory message. Most readers probably do not have one on one relations with the sender(s) of the messages but could infer both the implicit and explicit meanings and intentions conveyed in the messages simply because there are certain mutual beliefs that hold in the messages which project world views and cosmology of the senders and readers in the context that the messages are sent. On that note, the need to examine the language, context, speech act, mutual beliefs and the features of advertisements in the newspaper congratulatory messages arises.

Pragmatic studies have been attempted in various areas of language use. However, to the best knowledge of the researcher, in the aspect of congratulatory messages in particular, little or nothing has been done. Therefore this work builds on Amodu (2003) who did a pragmatic analysis on the language of advertisement. This work focuses on a pragmatic analysis of newspaper congratulatory messages. The work sets out to see the speech acts that feature in them, the inferences that can be drawn from them, the kind of context they appear in, the mutual beliefs and the level to which the messages are a form of advertisement. The reason is to see if the findings will be similar or will differ, so as to cover the possible existing gap.

1.2 Research Questions

To this end, this research aims at providing answers to the following research questions:

i. What types of pragmatic acts occur in congratulatory messages?
ii. To what extent are the congratulatory messages a form of advertisement?
iii. To what extent do senders of congratulatory messages achieve their desires?
iv. To what extent do both the senders and the readers share similar mutual beliefs?

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to carry out a pragmatic analysis of congratulatory messages in Nigerian newspapers to show how language is used to express intentions, that is, the way the intentions of the senders are expressed in order to bring to bear the meaning within the context of the Nigerian sociocultural milieu through the application of pragmatic concepts. In order to achieve this, the objectives of the study include to:

i. identify the types of pragmatic acts that occur in congratulatory messages;
ii. analyse the extent to which the messages are a form of advertisement:
iii. explore the extent to which the senders of congratulatory messages achieve their desires; and
iv. examine the extent which both the senders and the readers share similar mutual beliefs.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study of Speech Acts (which is the core of Pragmatics) has grown appreciably, but from a theoretical perspective in particular. In this study, an attempt has been made to extend the theoretical base of Speech Acts study, to practical climes using textual samples that are probably different from those analyzed in previous studies of language use in advertisements.

The study is therefore, the writer's attempt to analyze congratulatory messages in three selected Nigerian dailies. It explores new areas that previous studies on Pragmatics may not have covered. Thus, the study is intended to add to existing knowledge in the area and also serve as reference material for other researchers. Here in lies the justification of the study.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

Congratulatory messages are communicated in the print and electronic media. The study focuses on the pragmatic analysis of the language of congratulatory messages in the print media, the newspaper precisely. The print media has been adopted because the congratulatory messages sent through that medium contain pragmatic elements suitable for the study. Secondly, due to time and space, the print media seemed easy to access and make reference to, compared to the electronic media. The three newspapers adopted for the study are Daily Trust, Nigerian Tribune and Vanguard. The reason for the choice of newspapers is that they reflect different spheres and values of life ranging from political, social, cultural and religious endeavours of the Nigerian people therefore, are suitable for the study. However, only issues that relate to the study are addressed. Efforts have also be made to analyze contemporary congratulatory messages in the selected Nigerian dailies. The period spans from January 2013 to June 2013 because within this period there are a lot of celebrations ranging from Birthdays, Coronations, Children's' Day, and Democracy Day to Office Anniversaries that prompt well wishes from well wishers. Therefore newspaper congratulatory messages produced within this period as regards those celebrations contain pragmatic elements suitable for the research. The method of Pragmatics adopted for this work is Bach and Hanishs' theory of Mutual Conceptual Beliefs (MCBs) and Searle's classification of Speech Acts.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Preamble

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section reviews previous studies, the second section reviews concepts associated to the study: Language and Context, Inference, Mutual Contextual Beliefs, Intention and the Speech Act Theory and the third is the theoretical framework adopted for this study.

2.1 Review of Earlier Studies

There are several researches in the field of language of adverts and Pragmatics. Studies in these fields have tried to investigate issues such as the structure of language of advertisements, stylistic features of language of adverts, and challenges of adverts using language. Some of these works shall be subject of review in this section. Little (1980), explains that advert is an inevitable part of the business world. He is of the view that as soon as persuasion starts, it will accelerate steadily, for every seller has the same idea and each finds himself forced to draw attention; to make more and more claims for his product through the use of language and visuals. He strongly asserts that adverts of this kind are still communication not so much of information about the product as an attitude towards the product. However, this is something very different from factual communication in word.

Brown and Yule (1983), contains propositions which are relevant to this study. They classify language according to the various functions which is called upon to perform. According to them, the conversational function of language is used basically for the transfer of factual and propositional information. A fundamental condition for the effective performance of any utterance can be clearly outlined and conformity or departure ascertained. In other words, it is

possible to specify the conditions which an utterance must fulfill in order to succeed in the performance of the intended purpose of its speaker.

Peters (1996) emphasizes that language is an important component in advertisement. He is of the view that the effectiveness of an important advert lies in the powerful presentation of its messages through a language medium. He believes that art is a medium and an instrument of revolution and the language of communication must be simplified in order to achieve the desired effect of reaching the audience. True as this may sound, he was not mindful of the fact that language could be manipulated to fit a purpose and that the language of junk journalism is presupposing and speculative. Obviously, there are skills involved in language use but very few can use them effectively to achieve the desired result be it in writing or in speech. This could be because of their ignorance of the forces that operates in language use.

Jimoh (1998), examines the features of the language of adverts. He stresses the importance of adverts to the daily life of Nigerians and how language is used in a peculiar way to achieve set goals and objectives. Furthermore, he examines the lexical, syntactic and semantic features of the language of adverts. He concludes that adverts in whichever medium of communications involve two interacting processes which are communication and persuasion. He also asserts that apart from persuasion, adverts are also to familiarize consumers with a particular product or remind consumers of the benefits to be derived from particular products in the hope of increasing sale. This work though important was not able to discover the effects of these persuasions on the consumers.

Nnadi (1999), makes a brief examination of adverts messages in Igbo speaking community. Her findings show that most of the adverts are still written or rendered in English language and not in Igbo language. This she says has rendered adverts in Igbo language

unnatural and sometimes may not convey the message intended. She is of the view that the continued use of English language for adverts is not very productive and the fact that industries that are efficient and profit-driven especially in Nigeria continue to engage in such unproductive approach suggest that there are or may be problems with adverts in Igbo language.

Although, she concentrates on Igbo language, the suggestions she gives could equally be applied to adverts message development in other Nigerian languages. She opines that "for effective advertisement message development in Igbo language, adequate attention must be paid to the crucial issues of language competence on the part of Igbo advertisement media workers. There is the need to train these people to cope with the challenges of the job. This can be applied to other languages to solve the problem of ambiguity and to create the intended effect.

Peters (1996), in his emphasis on the importance of language in advertisement was not mindful of the fact that language could be manipulated to fit a purpose and that the language of junk journalism is presupposing and speculative. Jimoh (1998), in his examination of the language of adverts was not able to discover the effects of these persuasions on consumers. Nnadi (1999), restricted her research to the importance of adverts in Igbo languages. However, she did not recognize the fact that Nigeria has diverse culture, and restricting the language of advertisement to a local language could mar the intention of many advertisements since English language is official language in Nigeria and because the ethnic groups probably do not share the same mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs).

Amodu (2003) examines how commercial advertisements, for instance, appeal to unworthy motives and hence exploit human weakness through the use of language of persuasion which is misleading "…that the language of commercial advert with excessive persuasion fails morality indeed because of its misinformation…". His findings show that language of

commercial adverts with excessive persuasions fails morality indeed because of its misleading information which is effected through presentation of incomplete information, use of vague or ambiguous terminology from which readers find erroneous meanings, biased and sensational selection of words and information given to the audience for their commercial gains.

Amodu (2013) examines presupposition and overstatement in the language of advertisement "…in advertising, the target audiences often feel that language used is not for genuine information. It is only used to persuade people to simply buy the advertised product that they do not need…" He found out that language of advertisement is only use to persuade people to simply buy the advertised product that they do not need. His findings show that presupposition and overstatement exist in the language of advertisement in order to make the message persuasive, strong and attractive. Presupposition and overstatement in language of advert have both the literary and figurative meanings. Most advertisements contain counterfeit presuppositions in order to exploit the target audience's interpretative capacity. The use of language is central in the art and crafting of advertisement. Persuasion components exist in the informative contents of commercial advertisements. Therefore, he concludes that presupposition and overstatement are unavoidable in the language of advertisement.

Abaya (2011) is concern with the analysis of Nigerian Military Coup Announcements from the perspective of pragmatics. The study demonstrates that despite their military background and formation, the coup announcements have elements of political language that are ingrained in them to achieve specific purposes. The study reveals that Speech Acts in coup events depend largely on the context that gave birth to them; and that social relations between the interlocutors is both asymmetric and symmetric depending on the audience being addressed. His work focuses on how coup speeches are used to perform Speech Acts. He is of the opinion that

Nigerian Coup Announcements despite its peculiarities can be subsumed under political language, and they are composed of direct and indirect speech acts. He further states that a coup announcement is not solely an aspect of political or military language, but a manifestation of the relationship between language and power because military employ a particular style of language to bring about a change in regime. The research is aimed at throwing more light on coup announcements in order to understand the Nigerian military and the impact of its actions on the nation's political life. The study reveals that the format of military coup announcements are in such a way that they appeal, sensitise, persuade and sway the public to accept their overthrow of power from a previous government. He found that a military coup announcement can be conveyed successfully by a synthesis of the pragmatic, social and linguistic context.

However, each of the study reviewed has its relevance to the present study; Peters (1996) would facilitate readers' comprehension of the usefulness of effective communication in order to achieve set goals. Jimoh (1998) would facilitate the idea that Newspaper Congratulatory Messages are also a form of advertisement that use lexical and syntactic features of language therefore, would help the readers to understand the two interacting processes which are communication n persuation which are involved in advertisement. Nnadi (1999) would help readers to understand the relevance of language use in a particular speech community. It would also aid the understanding of competence in a particular language and the effects of ambiguity in language use.

Therefore, this research intends to cover the gap that has been created or left uncovered by other research works thus; all the studies reviewed though on pragmatics and general advertisement, none of them identified congratulatory messages as a form of advertisement. Also that congratulatory messages are better understood with the help of context and MCBs becasuse

the meaning of such utterances as contained in the messages can be understood not just by their syntactic structure or what they literally mean but this time around with the help of readers' inference, context of language use and MCBs. Newspaper Congratulatory Messages in Nigerian Dailies are a form of advert which contain several Speech Acts therefore, discovers the effects of persuasions on consumers, how communication could be made and not marred if English language is used, and how language of junk journalism is manipulated to fit a purpose due to the fact that it is presupposing and speculative whereby specifying conditions which an utterance must fulfill in order to succeed in the performance of the intended purpose of its speakers.

If newspaper adverts, especially those of congratulatory messages engage linguistic variables in conveying their messages to reflect the current trends and value system of a society, coupled with the mutual beliefs both the senders and the readers share, it will go a long way to aid the ability of the readership to identify the intended and hidden meanings in such messages rather than having them hampered.

2.2 Conceptual Review

This section reviews literature around the major concepts that are central to this study: Context Indirect Speech Acts, Inference, Intention, Language, Mutual Contextual Beliefs and Speech Acts.

2.2.1 Pragmatics: An Overview

Pragmatics in Katz view explicates the reasoning of speakers and hearers. The usefulness of Pragmatics can be seen in both abstract and practical characterization (sense). Generally, Pragmatics is needed if we want a fuller, deeper and generally more reasonable account of human language behaviour. Over the past decades, several studies have been carried out on Pragmatics where the users of a language are the centre of attention. The researchers talk about

the user's full point of view in relation to context of use (Mey 2001:5). Researchers such as Leech (1983) have been able to demonstrate how Pragmatics differs from other studies such as Semantics, though they are complementary.

The essence of every communication is for codes to be transferred effectively. Recently, some linguists have discovered that at times more is communicated than is said. As a consequence of this, the need to study Pragmatics was triggered off and many scholars came up with different definition of the term. (Mey 2001).

According to Yule (2008:4), Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning… it is the study of contextual meaning… it is the study of how more gets communicated than said. It is a discipline that is concerned with the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. Its studies involve a consideration of how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with whom they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances.

Mey (2001:6) defines pragmatics as "the field of linguistics which studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society." To him, "a truly pragmatic consideration has to deal with the users in their social contexts; it cannot limit itself to the grammatically encoded aspects of contexts, as the grammatical requirement seems simple. The linguistic encyclopedia (1991:354) defines Pragmatics as the rules and principles which govern language use, as opposed to the abstract idealized rules of, for instance, grammar, and the relationships between the abstract systems of language use. Syal and Jindal (2001:29) see Pragmatics as an "attempt to relate meaning to context of utterances. It views language as action which is performed by speakers."

Furthermore, Pragmatics can be seen as the study of the meaning of individual utterances in relation to their context of use. The advantage of studying language via Pragmatics is that one can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (for example, prayers) that they are performing when they speak. The big disadvantage is that all these very human concepts are extremely difficult to analyze in a consistent way. In Pragmatics, the linguistic structure provides the framework upon which meaning is built, but interpretation or intention overrides the structure.

In an attempt to express themselves, people not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they also perform actions via these utterances. This aspect of Pragmatics is what is regarded as Speech Act. Speech Act theory accounts for the reason why the meaning of certain utterances is not derived from the formal properties of words and sentences. Congratulatory messages are written by well-wishers to express different (good) intentions. The choice of writing depends on the state of mind of the senders and how they wish to express it. These messages are written to suit the receiver's status and the particular occasion which the later is celebrating. No wonder Mey (200:93) states that Speech Acts are produced in an actual situation of language use, by people having something in mind. He adds that such a production naturally presupposes producer and a consumer, whose intentions are relevant and indispensable to the correct understanding and description of their utterance.

The review of Pragmatics is relevant to this study because it helps in the analysis and the interpretation of congratulatory messages. It divulges the hidden intentions besides the meaning that is derived from the linguistic structure of the message. The pragmatic analyses of congratulatory messages give a better insight into the various acts (for example, acts of prayer, wish and acknowledgement) embedded in them. People perform several Speech Acts in writing

their congratulatory messages. These several acts are embedded in one single act-the act of congratulating.

2.2.2 Language, Pragmatics and Context

Language is a unique feature of man. Little wonder Barber (1965) states that language is a quintessentially human trait that obviously distinguishes man from animals. Language is seen to be a very crucial human trait that clearly differentiates human beings from other animals. Language is part of what constitutes the world we live in therefore, the usefulness of language cannot be over emphasized because man uses it to communicate his feelings, ideas, emotions, and interact with fellow men. Nevertheless, for effective communication to take place, language has to be used appropriately, and not in isolation. This is due to the fact that language is used to communicate sense.

Language conveys meaning when it is used in the appropriate context. Tyler (1978:384) asserts that we understand language when we understand the meaning of utterances not in terms of themselves, but relative to that context they establish or presuppose. Traugott and Pratt (1980:11) states that when language is used, it is always used in a context. Context is important and inevitable in the use of language. Stubbs (1983:1) puts that words, language and context of situation are inseparable.

The notion of context came into linguistics in order to extend on extralinguistics. Context is important in figuring out ambiguities in spoken or written language. Context is a dynamic not a static concept: it is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible (Mey 2001:39). The use of

linguistic elements in the context of interaction is user-oriented; therefore language, context and the participants are inseparable.

Context of situation cannot be discussed without making references to Bronislaw Malinowski, an anthropologist and J.R. Firth,S a linguist, who were both concerned with stating meaning in terms of the context in which language is used though from different perspectives. Malinowski holds the view that an utterance only makes sense if its context is known to both the speaker and the hearer. Highlighting this point, he went further to say that "living languages must not be treated like dead ones, torn from their context of situation". His view was derived from his observation of the way in which the language of the Trobriand Island in the South pacific fitted into their everyday activities, and was thus an inseparable part of them. According to him, language used in books is not at all the norm; it is a far-fetched derivative function of language, for language was not originally a "mirror of reflected thought". He maintained that language was "a mode of action" not "countersign of thought" (Malinowski 1923, cited in Palmer, 1981:51-53).

Firth's view is a linguistic approach to context of situation. In his view, he acknowledges his debt to Malinowski but felt Malinowski's context of situation is not satisfactory for more accurate and precise linguistic approach. Firth avers that context of situation is one of the linguist's apparatus for description; in the same way as are the grammatical categories that he uses (Palmer 1981:53-54). Firth asserts that the descriptive process must begin with the collection of a set of contextually defined homogeneous texts and the aim of description is how the sentences or utterances are meaningful in their contexts (cited in Coulthard, 1977:1). Crystal (1989:48) sees context as the place in which a communicative event can occur.

From the above definitions, it is obvious that context plays a fundamental role in conveying meaning in any given speech event, especially in written texts such as written congratulatory messages. Lack of a foreknowledge of the setting and the participants involved in a written text would make the text very difficult to comprehend. Context therefore gives a lucid interpretation to the meaning of utterances, most especially when the intended recipients and other readers cannot see the senders of the messages, to ask what they mean by the written expressions in their congratulatory messages. It is however possible to infer the implicit and explicit intentions of the senders, but this possibility is based on the context and the mutually shared knowledge of the sender and the receiver. Mey (2001:24) posits that "no matter how natural our language facilitates or how convention-bound their uses, as language users, we always operate in context". Therefore, context is inevitable in the use of language. It must be taken into account whenever we formulate our thoughts about language.

Different linguists observe the existence of different contexts. Yule (1996:129) observes two types; the linguistic context and the physical context. Other scholars like (2003:78-79) and Adegbite (1999:191-192) have stated that at least four types of contexts are impinging on utterance interpretation: the physical, the linguistic, the socio-cultural and the psychological contexts.

The physical context reveals the time and place in which a linguistic expression is uttered. One can think of this in terms of where the conversation is taking place, what objects are present, what actions are occurring and so forth. According to Yule (1996:129) 'our understanding of much of what we read and hear is tied to the physical context, particularly time and place, in which we encounter linguistic expressions'. The socio-cultural context reflects the beliefs, habits,

value system, religion, cultures of the interlocutors that are involved in a discourse or speech event.

The linguistic environment is also known as co-text. It refers to what has been said already in the utterance. It describes the meaning derived from the way words in a sentence are combined to make sense or give meaning. For example, if I begin a discussion with Marion Jones in the next sentence I refer to "her" as being a top notch athlete, it is the linguistic context that lets the interlocutors know the intended meaning of the word in the sentence, that is the antecedent "her" (the first person "her" refers to) is Marion Jones. The physical and socio-cultural settings also influence the meaning derived from a linguistic context (Adegbija 1999:192).

The psychological context expresses the state of mind of the interlocutors, if it is that of joy, pain, anger, sadness, excitement, commitment or fulfillment and so on as the case may be. The different types of context highlighted above play notable roles in the understanding of written congratulatory messages. For instance, the combination of words to make sense in written congratulatory messages determines the linguistic context of the message.

The newspaper and some features of the congratulatory message also reflect the physical contexts because they show the time and place the texts were written and also give the readers background information of the context. The socio-cultural context which is also revealed by the linguistic expressions of the well wisher(s) or sender(s) of the messages shows the cultural and religious beliefs and the social backgrounds of both the sender(s) and the recipient(s) of the message. The psychological context also derived from the linguistic context reveals that the congratulatory messages are basically emotional and expressive of the sender's state of mind to suit the celebrated occasion. Consequently, the co-text together with the physical, psychological

and socio-cultural contexts play indisputably expedient roles in determining the appropriate hidden intentions of the messages. All of them are combined in a way that reveals the non literal intention of the text.

There is no doubt that context contributes to meaning. There are different features that make context up and these features help in understanding the context of a speech situation. Hymes (1962) cited in Osisanwa (2003:75-76) and Omunu (1997:15) identified eight features of context as participants, topic, setting, channel, code, ends, purpose and message form. In a speech event the participants play the roles of the addressor (that is the writer or speaker) and the addressee (that is the reader, listener or viewer). The topic is the theme or subject matter of a speech event. The setting involves the time frame and place where the discourse takes place. The ends reveal the intention of the addressor and effects on the addressee. The purpose expresses the aim of the discourse. The channel expresses the medium employed in communicating whether written or spoken; informal or formal; extemporal or prepared. The code examines the language used in the speech event. Lastly, the message form has to do with the form the discourse takes. For instance, if it is a newspaper advertisement, sermon, letter, chat and so on. Each of these features plays very relevant roles in getting a clear picture of the context of situation. They also help in understanding the meaning that can be interpreted to linguistic expressions like that of written congratulatory messages.

M. A. K. Halliday expounded some of the factors that collectively determine context and subsumed them within three categories namely; field of discourse, mode of discourse and tenor of discourse. The field of discourse involves the setting and the topic. The setting is the place or the environment in which the discourse takes place. There are two types of setting, the immediate setting and the wider setting. The immediate setting has to do with what the people

involved in a conversation can see and hear. On the other hand, the wider setting is what they are affected by in that immediate setting, which is the topic that deals with the subject matter of the discourse. The topic of any discourse has an effect on how the conversation goes on because it is the main point of communication. The relationship between the topic and the setting varies from one discourse to another. The setting and topic of discourse must also be appropriate for any discourse to make sense.

The mode of discourse is the channel in which language is communicated. Language has two modes of communication; the spoken and the written which can be further classed into formal and informal, and extemporal and prepared types of spoken and written communication. Tyler (1978:360) states that speaking and writing impose different constraints on both memory and interpretation and that as context of discourse they are not equivalent. According to him, text builds an imminent structure for its own interpretation, most of which is implicit, 'given only by vague and ambiguous hints and notices and many of which are directions to instructions not even within the text, but presumed to be part of any normal reader's common place knowledge'. In other words, the writer presupposes the reader's ability to assign to it some appropriate category or genre name that will automatically reveal its purpose, goals and anticipate its structure. Writers use words to spell out their thought since they cannot use intonation and gestures in order to create a lasting impression in the minds of their readers.

There are different modes of communication and different contexts are associated with different modes of communication; some permissible with the written mode, while others are with the spoken mode. Written congratulatory messages leave a lasting impression on the minds of their readers as well as communicate an intention peculiar to the intended receiver of the message that is why the written medium serves as the most appropriate channel.

According to Haynes (1989) tenor is the personal "atmosphere" in which conversation takes place. The tenor of discourse is the actual interaction of co interlocutors, their social roles, personal attitude and intentions. Two types of tenor exist that is the immediate tenor which is the personal relationship that is established through face to face contact, and the wider tenor which is the expected roles that society allots to the speakers. Besides having facts and ideas to exchange, people also have relationships and are involved in what they are saying. The tenor of discourse plays a vital role in written congratulatory messages because it reveals the social roles and intentions of the senders in their written words.

Language conveys different meanings when used in different contexts. Therefore, the usefulness of contexts cannot be over emphasized. Palmer (2002:60) postulates the usefulness of context. He holds the view that deixis also reflect contexts. The speaker must be able to identify the participants in the discourse in order to appropriately use the first and second person pronouns-'I, we and you' as used in the English Language, also the use of proper names and articles. For example, a person named 'Jones' is referred to as Jones only in his own known context.

The effective use of the locative markers "this, that, here and there" to distinguish between the position or closeness of the speaker and other positions or greater distances. The exact spatial relationship indicated by such words will vary from language to language. Time relations are indicated in English not only by general adverbs such as 'now' and 'then' but by more specific ones such as 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' which helps to identify the time of speaking or writing and its relation are often incorporated into the grammar of the verb.

Another aspect of context is provided by social relations. After identifying the person to whom you are speaking, your use of language portrays a social relationship. We can distinguish

between the familiar and the polite forms as is the case with most European languages especially French 'Tu' and 'vous' forms. Or English language usages such as 'may I help?' and 'can I help you.' The choice between the familiar and the polite forms is determined by two factors which Brown and Gilman (1960) cited in Mey (2006:43) termed POWER and SOLIDARITY.

The more speakers have in common, the less they will need to use words to identify familiar things. This principle therefore, accounts for the frequent use of expressions such as 'this' or 'that' to refer to things in a shared physical context. Deitic expression also reveal context. They pin down the meaning of words to a particular interpretation. Deitic expressions are considered among the first form of language to be spoken by younger children to indicate, show, display, or point to something or somebody. This shows that deitic expressions cut across all ages. Levinson (2003:54) is of the view that 'that the single most obvious way in which the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structure of language themselves is through the concept of deixis.'

As a subject of Pragmatics, deixis is a Greek word which simply means 'pointing through language'. As such, any linguistic form that is used in carrying out this "pointing task", could be referred to as deitic expression or indexical. Finch (2000:214) argues that "deixis refer to those features of language which orientate our utterances in time, space, and speaker's standpoint'. This goes to imply that, understanding of the meaning of certain words or phrases in an utterance requires contextual information or interpretation. Similarly, Mey (2001:55) asserts that 'indexical expressions are a particular kind of referential expression which, in addition to the semantics of their 'meaning', their sense , include a reference to the particular context in which that sense is put to work'. Deitic expressions are also used in written congratulatory messages. They play some vital roles in the analysis of congratulatory messages. They help to pin down certain

expressions to a particular interpretation. Therefore the review of speech and content are relevant to this study because speeches (congratulatory messages) are delivered in different context and these four types of context in this study combine together to lead to lead to interpretation of well-wishes in the congratulatory messages such that form the linguistic expressions of the text.

2.2.3 Inference

The hearer of an utterance or reader of a written text has no direct access to the meaning which the speaker or writer has in mind. To arrive at the interpretation of such an utterance or a chain of utterances (or written text), the hearer or reader infers from the context or draws conclusion from known or assumed facts or statements, from available data or a particular premise (Adegbija 1999, Osasinwa 2003). Inference allows the hearer or a reader to deduce meaning from what is said or written and what is left unsaid or unwritten in an utterance. Wales (1989:248) defines inference as 'the deductive process through which something is worked out or made explicit in terms of what is unspoken or unwritten'.

Inference is also the deductive process through which the addressee or reader progresses from the literal meaning of an utterance to what the speaker or writer actually intends to express. (Adegbija, 1999:193, Moore 2001). The context of an utterance is often very crucial in making the appropriate inference. Inferences are made on the basis of the background context, our experience of life or world knowledge, and the mutual beliefs. Bach and Harnish (1979) and Adegbija (1999) observe that knowledge of the literal meaning of an utterance often contributes towards making the appropriate inference that will lead to the non-literal meaning.

The review of inference is one of the backbones of this study because it explicates how the intentions embedded in written congratulatory messages are interpreted. The written congratulatory messages can only communicate to the readers when they infer from the literal

statements the non-literal intentions of the senders. It is also relevant to this study because it helped the analyses in deducing meaning from what is written and what is left unwritten in the messages.

2.2.4 Intention

The concept of intention is also very important in understanding speech acts. According to Searle (1965:226) 'In speaking language I attempt to communicate things to my hearer by means of getting him to recognize my intention to communicate just those things'. Bach and Harnish (1979) have also used this concept in their work to show how the hearer or reader can decode a speaker or writer's intention from mutual contextual beliefs. According to them, 'the contextual beliefs that figure in speaker's and hearer's interference must be mutual if communication is to take place'.

Adegbite (1999:191) says intention refers to the 'goal purposed to be achieved, resident in the mind of a speaker or hearer'. Intention could also mean what a speaker or writer has in mind and wants to pass across to his hearer or reader. According to Adegbija (1999) in interactional exchange, people often have different intentions. Sometimes, the intentions may coincide. Intentions can change as interaction progresses. Intentions are often indeterminate; that is, they may not always be easily accessible. The addressee or reader in a communicative exchange often tries to recognize the speaker's or writer's intention. Deductions about the meaning being communicated by the speaker or writer are often based on the context of interaction and interpretations of the intention of the speaker or writer. Therefore, the review of intention helps in understanding the various Speech Acts.

2.2.5 Speech Act Theory

In an attempt to express oneself, people not only produce utterances containing words and grammatical structures, they perform actions via those utterances. This aspect of Pragmatics is what is regarded as Speech Acts. One of the components of pragmatics is the Speech Act Theory. Speech Act Theory was first formed by Oxford Philosopher J.L Austin in 1939, and came to function in 1955 when he presented his views during the lecture at Harvard University. His views were later published posthumously in 1975 as *How to Do Things with Words;* Saeed (2003).

Austin's work is in reaction to the traditional influential attitude of language by logical positivists who hold the view that the meaning of a sentence is reducible to its verifiability, that is the extent to which, and by which it can be judged to be true or false. And that there is a difference between talking and acting and all talk aim at describing the world. Austin refutes the former position. He opposes the view in terms of "common sense" thus language is used for far more than making statements and for the most part, utterances cannot be said to be either true or false, that is not all sentences are statements, they are not a description therefore cannot be said to be true or false. Austin's thinking in course of time came to be known as Speech Act Theory, further developed and codified by his student, American philosopher, John R. Searle who subsequently became the defender of Austin's ideas (Saeed 2003).

Some or many linguistic theories make assumptions about human language thus: a combination of sounds and meaning (Descriptive grammar) or a set of correct sentences (Transformational thinking) without paying attention to it as an activity which produces speech acts, that is the production of a symbol, word or sentence in the performance of the speech act which is produced in the actual situation of language use.

Mey (2001:95) sees Speech Acts as verbal actions happening in the world. They are words with which to do things. Yule (2008) also sees Speech Acts as actions performed via utterances. These utterances in English are given more specific labels such as apology, complaints, compliment, invitation or request. These descriptive terms are labeled according to the speaker's communicative intention in a particular context of expression. When people express themselves, they produce utterances and perform actions through such utterances. For example, a situation where a principal says to his student "you are dismissed" this utterance is more than just a statement, it also contains an action, that is the act of expulsion. In a speech act situation, the speaker expects the hearer to recognize his/her communicative intention. Both the speaker and hearer usually benefit from the circumstances surrounding the utterance. These circumstances including other utterances are referred to as speech event. No wonder Saeed (2003) claims that "Communicating functions also rely on both general knowledge of the local context of utterance. By making the utterance "you are dismissed" the speaker is not making the kind of statement that can be regarded as true or false (constatives), but rather statements that are performatives.

Austin asserts that performatives cannot be true or false, only felicitious or infelicitious. He creates a clear distinction between constatives and performatives. Constatives are statements that attempt to describe reality and can be judged true or false. On contrast, performatives are utterances used to perform actions. Austin eventually comes to the conclusion that most utterances, at their base, are performative in nature. That is, the speaker is nearly always doing something by saying something. Austin states that performatives are speech acts that create social realities by virtue of uttering the right words by the right person(s) in the right situation(s). For example; using the explicit performative by a judge to say "I sentence you to ten years in

prison" in the context of a trail in a court of law, is to create a social reality, i.e in the case of a criminal trial.

Austin also explains that one simple way to decide whether a Speech Act is a performative is to insert the word "hereby" between subject and verb. If the resulting utterance makes sense, then the act is probably a performative. For example,

- I hereby pronounce you man and wife
- I hereby appoint you as the class captain of primary five
- I hereby ordain you priest

Austin also distinguishes between explicit performatives and implicit performatives. To Austin, explicit performatives name the acts they perform for example; I congratulate, I sentence, I promise. Austin says that we can have a long list of these performative verbs. On the other hand, the implicit verbs do not name the acts they perform. For example;

a. Come.

b. Stand here.

These utterances do not specify the acts they perform but can be made explicit by adding an explicit performative verb. For example;

a. I order you to come.

b. I command you to stand here.

In an attempt to breakdown the distinction between the constative and the performative, Austin (1962), cited in palmer (2001:95) gave the original distinction between the different aspects of speech acts with the view that there are three acts that we perform when we speak or write;

a) The locutionary act: is the act of saying something (the locution) with a particular sense and reference. It is identified by the explicit performative or the force of the utterance.
b) The illocutionary act: is the performance of the act in saying something. It is the force of the utterance. In this case the locution is used for particular purposes such as congratulating, requesting, betting, warning, and so on. This is the core of speech act theory.
c) The perlocutionary act: is the act performed by the hearer of an utterance as a result of what is said. It is the effect of the illocutionary act which is induced in the hearer or audience. For example, persuading, infuriating, calming, and so on.

To Austin, the three acts can be intended or unintended but illocutionary acts always rely upon the existence of conventions while perlocutionary acts are natural or non-conventional. Illocutionary act is the core of speech act theory. The locutionary act belongs to the traditional territory of truth–based semantics while the perlocutionary act is beyond the investigation of language and meaning since it deazls with the effect of the act of an utterance on the hearer or reader. The perlocutionary act is more related to psychology and partly a matter of what is said. This makes illocutionary act the proper domain of Pragmatics.

Focusing on illocutionary acts, Austin maintains that here one might find the 'force' of a statement and demonstrate its performative nature. For example, to say 'Don't run with scissors' has the force of a warning when spoken in a certain context. This utterance may be stated in an explicitly performative way, e.g., "I warn you, don't run with scissors." This statement is neither true nor false. Instead, it creates a warning. By hearing the statement, and understanding it as a warning, the editor is warned, which is not to say that the auditor must or will act in any particular way regarding the warning.

Austin maintains that certain conditions are to be met before a Speech act can be said to have an illocutionary force. These conditions are called “felicity conditions” and must be met in order for a Speech Act to be felicitous or happy and in order to prevent it from ‘”misfiring” in Austin’s words. For example, a judge in a court of law sentences an armed robber to ten years in prison, after the armed robber has undergone trial and was found guilty, will be regarded felicitious because that judge performed the act of judgment in the right circumstance, having the right and power to do so. But if the same act is done by a lecturer, during a lecture, the Speech Act would be misfired. These felicity conditions are preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition.

- **Preparatory conditions:** if an utterance will not be considered to be misfired, the person using that utterance to perform an act must have the right or authority to do so besides, that person must perform the act in the appropriate context of situation.
- **Sincerity conditions:** if the person performing the act lacks the appropriate beliefs or feelings, his illocutionary act will not unlike the preparatory conditions be nullified but the individual will be seen to have been guilty of an abuse which in the court of law is called perjury.
- **Essential conditions:** the person performing an illocutionary act is committed by the illocutionary force of his utterance to certain beliefs or intentions; and if he thereafter produces an utterance which is inconsistent with these beliefs or conducts himself in a way that is incompatible with the intentions to which he is committed, he may be judged guilty of a breach of commitment.

In the Austinian sense, an utterance is necessarily governed and determined by a ‘general condition of meaningfulness’. In other words, the utterance meaning must conventionally be

associated with the production of the kind of effect he intends. Austin also classifies Speech Acts into five; they are verdictis, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives.

a) Verdictives are typified by the giving of a verdict by a jury, arbitrator or umpire-acquit.
b) Exercitives are typified by the exercising of power, right or influence such as appoint, order, advice, warn.
c) Commissives commit the speaker to doing something, but also include declarations or announcements of intention such as promise, guarantee, bet, oppose.
d) Behabitives are a miscellaneous group concerned with attitude and the social behaviour such as apology, criticism, blessing and challenges.
e) Expositives, clarify how utterances fit into ongoing discourse, or how they are being used such as argue, postulate, affirm, and concede.

Another proponent of the Speech Act theory is Searle who developed, codified and refined Austin's theory of Speech Acts. Searle (1965) believes that speaking a language is a rule-governed behaviour and that the basic unit of communication is the Speech Act. Searle accepts the notion of illocutionary act but does not accept that of locutionary act instead, he proposes the existence of the propositional act which carries the content of an utterance.

He suggests that a propositional act includes the subsidiary acts of 'referring' to someone or something and 'predicting' some property or act of that to which one has referred. Austin emphasizes that the propositional act is not represented by the entire utterance, but only those portions of the sentence which do not include 'the indication of the illocutionary force'. Thus, an utterance consists of two (not necessarily separate) parts, a proposition and a function indicating device which marks the 'illocutionary force'. He observes that function-indicating devices in

English include word-order, stress, intonation contour, punctuation, and the mode of the verb and finally the set of performative verbs (Searle, 1965).

Searle (1965:31-38) argues that for an illocutionary act to be successful it must fulfill certain conditions, which are comparable to Austin's felicity conditions. He gives instance of these conditions, with the performative verb "promise'. According to him, four rules govern the making of a promise and every other speech. They are the propositional rule.

- **Propositional Rule**: in promising, an act must be predicted of the speaker and it must be a future act. A speaker cannot promise to have done something or that someone else will do something.
- **Preparatory Rule**: (a) a promise is defective if the promiser does not believe the promisee wants it done or even if the thing promised is something the promisee doesn't want done- otherwise whatever the speaker's intention it will act as a warning.
- (b) A speaker cannot promise to do something he or she would be expected to do anyway- as Searle observes any husband who promises his wife to be faithful in the next one week is likely to provide more anxiety than comfort.
- **Sincerity Rule**: the speaker must intend to perform the action; although as Searle admits it is in fact possible for someone to promise with no intention at all of honouring it, but then he is abusing the procedure.
- **Essential Rule**: the uttering of words counts as the understanding of an obligation to perform the action.

The derivation of the illocutionary force is where the main difference lies in the theories of Austin (1962) and Searle (1975). Austin argues that it is the successful realization of the speaker's intention, while Searle states that it is the product of the listener's interpretation of the

utterance. In his opinion a listener can correctly interpret a speaker's intention by understanding or interpreting the primary performatives (indirect speech act). This takes us to Searle's theory of indirect speech act. According to Searle, the notion of 'indirect speech act is meant to be, more particularly, an indirect 'illocutionary' act.

> In indirect speech acts the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer (Searle, 1975).

An account of such act, it follows, will require an analysis of mutually shared background information about the conversation, as well as of rationality and linguistic conventions. Searle introduces the notions of 'primary' and 'secondary' illocutionary acts. The primary illocutionary act is the indirect one, which is not literally performed. The secondary illocutionary act is the direct one, which is not literally performed. The secondary illocutionary act is the direct one, performed in the literal utterance of the sentence (Searle 1975:178). In the example:

(1) A= Proposer "Let's go to the dance."

(2) B= Rejecter "I am preparing for an interview."

Here the primary illocutionary act is B's rejection of A's proposal, and the secondary illocutionary act is B's statement that she is preparing for an interview (which means B would not make it to the dance). By dividing the illocutionary act into two parts, Searle is able to express that we can understand two meanings from the same utterance and still know the correct meaning to respond to.With this doctrine of indirect speech acts, Searle attempts to explain how it is possible that a speaker can say something and mean it, but additionally mean something else. This would be impossible, or at least it would be an improbable case, if in such a case the hearer had no chance of figuring out what the speaker means (over and above what she says and means). Searle's solution is that the hearer can figure out what the indirect speech act is meant to

be, and he gives several hints as to how this might happen. For the previous example a condensed process might look like this:

Step 1: A has made a proposal, and B responded by means of an illocutionay act.

Step 2: A assumes that B is cooperating in the conversation, being sincere, and that she has made a statement that is relevant.

Step 3: The literal meaning of B's response is not relevant to the conversation. Relevant answers in the situation at hand are found among the following:

Acceptance, rejection, counter suggestion, suggestion, for further discussion depending on the circumstances.

Step 4: since A assumes that B is cooperating, there must be another meaning to B's response.

Step 5: Based on mutually shared background information, A knows that they cannot leave until B is ready. Therefore, B has rejected A's proposition. It should therefore be assumed that B means more than she says at face value.

Searle (1975:65) cited in Mey (2001) says we must be able to differentiate the primary Illocutionary act from the literal, else, there is no way of making sense of indirect Speech acts.

Step 6: A knows that B has said something in something other than the literal meaning and the primary illocutionary act must have been the rejection of A's proposal.

Step 7: It is likely that B cannot combine the two things. This is an immediate consequence of the preceding step.

Step 8: Speech act theory has thought us that among the preparatory conditions, for speech act having to do with proposals are the ability and willingness to carry out such a proposed act.

Step 9: Therefore, one can infer that B's utterance in all likelihood is meant to be that she cannot accept one's proposal.

Step 10: One can conclude that the intention of mentioning B's interview is to reject A's proposal.

Searle argues that a similar process can be applied to any indirect speech act as a model to find the primary illocutionary act (Mey 2001:178).

Step 1: Understand the facts of the conversation.

Step 2: Assume cooperation and relevance on behalf of the participants.

Step 3: Establish factual background information pertinent to the conversation.

Step 4: Make assumptions about the conversation based on steps 1-3.

Step 5: If steps 1-4 do not yield a consequential meaning, then infer that there are two illocutionary forces at work.

Step 6: Assume the hearer has the ability to perform the act the speaker suggests .

The act that the speaker is asking be performed must be something that would make sense for one to ask. For example, the hearer might have the ability to pass the salt when asked to do so by a speaker who is at the same table, but not have the ability to pass the salt to a speaker who is asking the hearer to pass the salt during a telephone conversation.

Step 7: Make inferences from step 1-6 regarding possible primary illocutions.

Step 8: Use background information to establish the primary illocution (Searle 184).

With this process, Searle reconstructs what happens when an indirect speech act is performed. Searle's theory of indirect speech act is very important to this study in view of the fact that it provides a theoretical framework on how the reader or hearer gets to interpret the writer's or speaker's intention, since communication is only effective when the intentions conveyed by the writer or speaker conveys message or meaning to the hearer.

Searle (1975) also sets up the following classification of illocutionary acts:

- **Assertives:** Speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed
- **Directives :** Speech acts that are to cause the hearer to take a particular action i.e these speech acts embody an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something or to direct the hearer towards some goal. For example, a command or a piece of advice.
- **Commissives:** Speech acts that commits a speaker to some future action. It creates an obligation in the speaker e.g. the act of promising.
- **Expressives:** Speech acts that expresses on the speaker's attitude and emotions towards the proposition, e.g. excuses, condolences, congratulations. It expresses an inner state of mind of the speaker.
- **Declaratives:** Speech acts that change the reality in accordance with the proposition of the declaration, e.g. pronouncing two people as husband and wife, baptizing someone, pronouncing someone guilty and so on, if successfully performed brings about alternation in status or condition of the referred object(s).

2.2.6 Indirect Speech Acts

Searle's indirect Speech Act and his classification of Speech Acts, from his Speech Act theory has been adopted for the analysis of this research work. Searle's indirect Speech Act is an indirect way of communicating an intention to co-interlocutor(s). It tries to distinguish a

speaker's literal meaning from the non-literal meaning. Searle goes further to say that the utterance meaning or non-literal meaning can be worked out by deciding what the literal or sentence meaning is and what its opposite is. In an indirect Speech Act, the speaker means what he or she says but means something else as well, so that the utterance or non-literal meaning includes the sentence meaning but extends beyond it.

Therefore a sentence containing an illocutionary force indicator for one particular type of illocutionary force can be used to perform that act and simultaneously, another type of act. Apart from the sentence meaning conveyed in written congratulatory messages, they also convey a non-literal meaning. Searle says that for a hearer or reader to grasp both forces in the literal and the non-literal meaning, he or she must;

1. Know the rules for performing speech acts;
2. Share some background knowledge information with the speaker;
3. Exercise his or her power of rationality and inference in general.

Searle made his own classification of Speech Acts into five groups as follows; assertive, commissives, directives, expressive and declaratives. In this study, this classification has been adopted in order to name and describe the act of congratulating and the various acts that are embedded in them to form complete congratulatory messages.

According to Searle, assertives commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, such as stating, announcing, disclosing, attributing, affirming, informing, and predicting and so on. Commissives commits the speaker to some future course of action, for example; volunteering, offering, agreeing, inviting, promising and swearing. Directives are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something such as permitting, dismissing, urging, requesting, and advising. Expressives as Searle sees them are Speech Acts that express the

speaker's state of mind; that is attitude and emotions towards a proposition. For example congratulating, greeting, acknowledging, apologizing, thanking. Declarations are illocutionary acts that bring about changes in the state of affairs. Such acts include marrying, baptizing, blessing, passing sentence and so on.

Searle's theory of Speech Acts provides an encompassing framework for the analyses of the illocutionary acts that convey the well-wishers' varying intentions. While his indirect speech acts also shows how it is possible for someone to say or write something and mean it and in addition ,mean something else (hidden intentions) which is the case of the written congratulatory messages in news papers. Looking at written congratulatory messages at the surface level, they are assertives because they are statements used to state or assert something but beyond stating or asserting something they are used to express both obvious and hidden intentions that can be arrived at from the combination of the linguistic structure and their various contexts of use.

2.2.7 Cooperative Principle

According to Levinson (1983:102) CP and its maxims have to specify what participants have to say in order to converse in a clearly efficient, rational, cooperative way: They should speak sincerely, relevantly and clearly while providing information. The researcher also used the Grice's theory of conversational implicature which holds the view that when interlocutors are engaged in a conversation, they are guided by four sub-principles or maxims called the cooperative principle (henceforth, CP).

The maxim of quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as required

2. Do not make your contribution more informative than required.

The maxim of quality

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.

2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The maxim of relation

Make your contribution relevant.

The maxim of manner

Be perspicuous, and specifically:

1. avoid obscurity

2. avoid ambiguity

3. be brief

4. be orderly

The relevance of using these maxims is to avoid difficulty and breakdown in communication in terms of actual language use. Nevertheless, the Nigerian newspapers seem not to be guided by such principles that emanate from their ethical and ideological predispositions. Some of these newspapers' only interest is economic disposition and personal loyalty. The pragmatic competence expected to be upheld through the aforementioned maxims tends to be thrown into the dustbin.

2.2.8 Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs)

It is clear that any understanding of an utterance must involve reference to the attitudes of the speaker. To illustrate this, consider the utterance below made by a stranger to a student in Ahmadu Bello University:

"Do you know where the senate building is?"

Depending on whether the speaker is believed to already know the answer, the interpretation of the above can either be as a direct question for information, an offer of help to the hearer who might be lost or a rhetorical question.

Speech Act theory refer solely to the mental attitudes of the speaker of an utterance but mutual conceptual beliefs consider not only the speakers or writers attitude in performing a speech act but also a hearer's or reader's attitude in understanding an act.

The notion of mutual contextual beliefs has been introduced to account for hearer or reader's attitude in a conversation.

A proposition ***P*** is a mutual belief if shared by two agents ***A*** and ***B*** such that:

A beliefs ***P***

B beliefs ***P***

A beliefs ***B*** beliefs ***P***

It is not in every case that the participants or agents share same beliefs.

The pragmatic theory of Bach and Harnish is inference and intention-based. They argue "that for speakers to inform illocutionary acts; their hearers must understand what such acts mean; whether the acts are within or without the bounds of literalness". They also contend that mutual contextual beliefs between **S** (speaker) and **H** (hearer) as well as their world knowledge facilitate the inferential process. Their terminology, speech act schemata (SAS), explains different illocutionary strategies in terms of literal or non-literal utterances in discourse.

As part of the problem of human action, the study of speech acts is of great philosophical and psychological interest. Since the means by which Speech Acts are enacted is of great linguistic milieu in which they are enacted well. All four disciplines- Philosophy, Psychology, Linguistics, and Sociology- are brought together in the book Linguistic communication by Bach

and Harnish, who attempt to lay out a philosophically satisfactory theory of Speech Acts that is grounded in the best current psychological, linguistic and sociological research.

According to Bach and Harnish (1979) as cited by Terence Langendeon in his review of the book Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts: human linguistic communication is the action of issuing an utterance with a certain kind of intention whose fulfillment consists in its recognition. He went further to say that the major problem that a speaker faces in its recognition is one of design. The speaker must construct one's utterances so as to facilitate the hearer's recognition of speaker's intentions. While the problem of the hearer on the other hand is computational- the hearer must determine the speaker's intentions from the utterances he hears.

On the speaker's problem, Bach and Harnish have little to add to the philosopher H.P. Grice's conversational maxims. On the hearer's problem, however, they have a great deal to say of interest to psychologist, since they take cognizance of current research in speech perception and cognition in their formulation of a highly articulated model for computing speaker's intentions from their utterances.

Bach and Harnish see the computation as proceeding in essentially four stages. First, the hearer determines on the basis of his perception of the acoustic signal and his knowledge of the language what expression the speaker uttered. Second, he determines what the speaker meant by what the speaker uttered (operative meaning). Operative meaning provides the sense of the speaker's utterances and is computed on the basis of the hearer's knowledge of the language together with certain beliefs that the hearer has about the speaker, including those that he belief the speaker has about him.

If **A** utters "***The Secretary is kind"*** with the belief that the secretary in question is kind and the intention that **B** believes that the secretary is kind, and If **A** recognize thereby that **B**

beliefs t hat the secretary is kind and that **A** intends that **B** beliefs that the secretary is kind, then **A** has succeeded in stating that the secretary is kind. If in addition **B** comes to believe that the secretary is kind, then **A** has done more than communicating with **B**, **A** has convinced or persuaded **B** that the secretary is kind. Both stating and convincing are speech acts, but of different types. The act of stating is a form of communication and is called an illocutionary act. The act of convincing is not a form of communication and is called a perlocutionary act. (These terms, illocution and perlocution are those of philosopher J. L. Austin.)

These beliefs called Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs) figure prominently in Bach and Harnish's model of speech act determination. Here, they are used primarily to eliminate ambiguity; that is, to select the operative meaning out of all the semantic interpretations that the expression might have in context.

Third, given operative meaning and certain other mutual contextual beliefs, the hearer goes on to determine what the speaker says (locutionary act). The locutionary act provides both the sense and the reference of the speaker's utterance, along with an indication of what type of saying it is (declarative, imperative, e.t.c). Mutual contextual beliefs provide a reference for an expression either within its denotation or outside of it.

The fourth stage is the determination of how illocutionary act is the direct illocutionary act, is the direct literal illocutionary act, in which ***P*** is the propositional context of the locutionary act and ***F*** is compatible with the type of saying of the locutionary act. For example, any force that represents the attitude of believing the propositional content of the locutionary act and ***F*** is compatible with the type of saying of the locutionary act. For example, any force that represents the attitude of believing the propositional content of the act is compatible with a declarative locutionary act, among the forces that express the attitude of believing the propositional content

of the act are the following: stating, informing, responding, asserting, conceding, reporting, and predicting. Hence a declarative locutionary act may be used to perform literally and directly any one of several illocutionary acts, which act (if any) is actually performed depending on additional properties of what is said and mutual contextual beliefs.

Given the recognition that a literal illocutionary act is been performed, one may go on to conclude that yet another illocutionary act is being performed for example, there are circumstances under which the utterance "It's getting late" is used, and is intended to be recognized as being used, to request the hearer to hurry. Such an illocutionary act, which is computed on the basis of another illocutionary act (in this case the act of stating that it's getting late), is called as indirect illocutionary act. Indirect illocutionary acts are usually, though not necessary, nonliteral.

Indirect non literal illocutionary acts are to be distinguished from direct non literal illocutionary acts, the later, unlike the former, are directly computed on the basis of the locutionary act together with mutual contextual beliefs. Examples of such acts include familiar cases of sarcasm and hyperbole, such as I'm all thumbs. The speaker, in this case, would not be recognized as having expressed the belief that she consists entirely of thumbs, rather she is directly recognized as having stated that she is having difficulty in coordinating her purposive hand movements. Indeed, direct nonliteral illocutionary acts can be used as a basis for computing further indirect nonliteral illocutionary acts, such as when one states *I'm sure the cat just loves having its tail pulled* to request the hearer to stop pulling the cat's tail. The analysis of the distinction between indirect, possibly no snliteral, and direct non literal illocutionary acts is one of the original contributions of Bach and Harnish's book*: Linguistic Communication.*

Bach and Harnish (1979) emphasize the role of mutual contextual beliefs, knowledge, speaker's intention and indirect speech acts in communication. The approach of Bach and Harnish to speech is "intention" and "inference" based. They contend that for speakers to perform illocutionary acts that listeners have the understanding of the acts (MCBs). IT is in their claim that the act of conversation or interactional talk has to involve an inferential process. Their terminology of (SAS) schemata refers to an inevitable part of the inferential process in a communicative event. To them, mutual beliefs (MCBs) between a speaker and his hearer facilitate a streamlined inferential process, as the inference made or is expected to be made by the hearer does not depend on what the speaker says but on the contextual knowledge shared commonly by the speaker and hearer in discourse (Ibid.,P.15).To infer what S is saying H depends also on the presumption of literature(PL). H should know when the linguistic communication of S is "within or without" the bounds of literalness, and if S is speaking in a non literal dimension, H should not only acknowledge it, but should also be able to what understand such speech by S mean; he should have a mastery of the acts in S's non-literal language. The non-literal language involves the use of indirect speech acts. Apart from MCBs. Bach and Harnish recognize other types of beliefs (shared by an entire linguistic community) which the hearer relies on for his inferences.

Generally speaking, the review is relevant to the present study because the works reviewed applied different pragmatic concepts like Speech Acts, Context, Discourse, Inference which are relevant to this study because these concepts would facilitate the researcher's inference and understanding of the MCBs that feature in the congratulatory messages thereby arriving at the implicit intended meanings conveyed in the congratulatory messages alongside in

understanding and naming the various Speech Acts performed in the congratulatory messages. Thus, enhance the analyses and help the study in achieving its aim and objectives.

2.3 A Brief History of Advertising

Advertising is an audio or visual form of marketing communication that employs an openly sponsored non personal message to promote or sell a product, service or idea. Advertising is communicated through different mass media and the actual presentation of the message in a medium is referred to as advertisement or "ad".

Advertisement goes back to ancient times where people wrote on papyrus or hung wooden signs to show other people what they want to sell. The use of papyrus was common in Egypt, Ancient Greece and Rome. Another form is wall painting which can be traced back to India dated back to 4000BC. Wall or rock painting for commercial advertisement is associated with Asia, Africa and South America. In China it was oral advertisement as recorded in the classic of poetry (7^{th}-11^{th} centuries BC). The invention of printing in the 1440s had a big effect on advertising. Flyers and posters could be made very cheaply and by 1600 newspaper advertisements were common. After the civil war, advertising agencies became popular in America. First they only sold space in newspapers and magazines but later on they also wrote and produced their own advertisements.

2.3.1 Development of Advertising in Nigeria

According to Bel-Molokwu (2009), advertising is as old as man. He further posits that in Nigeria, the earliest recorded activities that could be described as advertising in its crude form include the town criers early morning gong signals that alerted the village dweller of an impending announcement. Ogbodoh (1990) posits thus: Advertising in Nigeria is said to have begun naturally with one of the earliest forms of mass communication town crying. This

traditional African medium performed the universal communication function of disseminating information about available goods, services, and ideas to the people. He further states that town crying was frequently employed to carry out advertisements or information about inter-tribal wars, disasters of some sort, important ceremonies including marriages, births, deaths, products, services, ideas, personalities and bargains. He went further to say that hawking and displays were the other known methods of advertising in the earliest times.

The advent of printing press in 1450 affected advertising a great deal. In Nigeria, the first printing press was established in Calabar in 1846. The first media advertisement ever carried out in Nigeria was in the form of information on shipping movement and cargo. It was a classified category ad. Consequently, other advertisements like good will messages, obituary, social activities like ballroom dances, began to appear in the newspaper. The development of modern photography also added depth to newspaper and outdoor advertising.

2.3.2 Types of Advertisement

Advertisement can be categorized according to theme or content. Broadly speaking, there are basically four types:

Product advertising- the main focus of the ad in this case is the product not the company or manufacturers, for example drinks.

Service advertising- the focus of this type of ad is not on a factory manufactured item or product but a company providing services. It portrays a company as a leading service provider in its particular field, for example banks.

Public service advertising- this type of advertising is also known as social service advertising or development advertising. Here the focus is on issues that impact society on a larger scale such as

polio eradication. The main aim is to create public awareness through hard-hitting direct message. This ad sells ideas father than products and services.

Institutional advertising- these type is directed at creating a good public image of a company. The ads focus on the organisation's work in areas of research, development and quality control. The purpose is to sell a positive image of the company rather than a product manufactured by a company.

2.3.3 Forms of Advertising

Newspapers- almost half of it is made of advertisement. Newspapers sell advertising space in all sections of their paper. It has classified advertisements and display advertisement. Classified advertisements appear in a separate section of the newspaper. While display advertisements take up from a few centimeters to a full page. They have illustrations, headlines and lots of information on a certain field.

Magazines- are mostly used all over and by national advertisers. In contrast to newspapers they are read when people have more time. They are kept for a few weeks or even months. Better printing quality and colour ads are among the advantages of magazine. Many special magazines are made for groups of people. The ads that appear there are especially for those groups. A computer magazine, for instance, may have many ads related to computers, printers or scanners.

Direct mail- consist leaflets, brochures, catalogs or letters that are mailed directly to people. Some others only have special list according to jobs that people have or their age or income. Direct mail cost a lot of money, but advertising companies can be sure they will reach the people.

Radio- local advertisers place about 70% of advertising on the radio. An advantage of radio is that people listen to programs while doing other things. In some cases radios are on the whole day. Commercials last about thirty seconds. Radio stations are more specialized in what they broadcast. One radio station offers pop music and has a younger listening audience; the other may broadcast classical music with older listeners. The ads can be chosen according to the group of people who listen.

Outdoor signs- they are large colourful outdoor signs and can easily catch the attention of by passers. This type of ad must be short and simple because viewers see them only for a few seconds. The main signs are posters, billboard and electronic display. Billboards are owned by local companies that rent them to advertizers. Sometimes ads are painted on buildings. Electronic billboards have large display where ads change very quickly. They are the most expensive kind of outdoor signs.

Television- this medium combines sound and moving images. It is one of the most expensive forms of advertising, but on the other hand it reaches a very wide audience. Advertisers buy time from television stations to broadcast their commercials. This time is cheaper at times when fewer people watch television, as in the early morning hours and gets very expensive during prime time evening shows. Sometimes advertisers pay a lot of money to get their ads on television during special programmes like the Olympic Games.

Internet- this form of advertising is becoming more and more important. Young people especially, spend more time on the internet. It has the advantage of being available to people around the world at all times. They range from banners to pop-ups. Companies that spend a lot of money on advertising often create their own internet for a certain product. Web users are often

asked to fill out a form that asks them about their daily routines, where they live, how old they are, how much they earn e.t.c. Companies use this information to find out what kind of people visit their websites. Sometimes ads are sent via email. Because a lot of unwanted emails (spam) are sent throughout the world, many people do not like this. The review is relevant to the research because it has helped the researcher to highlight those features of and established the fact that newspapers congratulatory message, to an extent, can be passed for a form of advertisement.

2.4 Brief History of the Print Media in Nigeria

The history of print media in Nigeria goes as far back as the 1840s when the European missionaries established Community Newspapers to propagate Christianity. This initiative later gave rise to the establishment of news paper outfits like Dr Nnamdi Azikwe in 1937; title 'West African Pilot', Azikwe's paper pioneered a general protest against attainment of independence in 1960.

The New Nigeria Newspaper Limited, with its head office along Ahmadu Bello Way Kaduna, was established by the then government of the northern region 23rd October 1964. The first copy of the paper was issued on January 1, 1966. Its initial name was Northern Nigeria Newspaper Limited, but when states were created, it was changed to New Nigeria Newspaper Limited up till today.

Before the establishment of NNN, the Northern Nigerian Government had established a Hausa Newspaper in Zaria called "Gaskiya ta fi Kwabo" in 1965. In March 1973, the company set up the Southern Plant alongside the one in Kaduna. They simultaneously printed newspapers which enhanced the wide spread of newspapers in Kaduna and Lagos.

As at today, Nigeria has various newspapers ranging from the Nigerian Tribune, The Punch, The Vanguard, The Pilot, The Sun, This Day and so on and so forth. Presently, Nigeria has a number of language papers ranging from Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Itsekiri etc. The relevance of the review to the study is that newspaper congratulatory messages are associated with the print media.

2.5 Brief History of some Congratulatory Words

Congratulations! – is a pluralized word which stems from Latin 'gratus' meaning pleasing since in the seventeenth century. The word 'congratulations' came into existence in the late sixteen century.

Felicitation!- It originates from late Latin 'felicitare' meaning to make happy. It came into play in the early 1700s.

Hip hip hurrah!- it has an uncertain origin. It surfaced in the 1800s but was in used since the mid 1700s. It refers to a collective cheer. Hurrah! Surfaced in the late 1600s. It might have started as a battle cry before it spread into a general usage.

Three cheers!- come in threes generally followed by name of person or thing being celebrated. The celebrant might respond 'cheers', which most especially in UK means 'thanks'. It entered English in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century and ultimately comes from Greek 'Kara' meaning 'head'.

Kudos! -is a singular noun. It finds its roots in hallowed halls of academic institutions. In the nineteenth century academic institutions translated the Greek 'kydos' meaning praise or renown. By the nineteen twenties kudos had spread beyond walls of universities into newspaper columns.

Props!- when congratulations are in order, the word props might come up. It is a slang shortening of 'proper' aroused in the 1900s and refers to 'respect' or 'esteem'. In addition to giving/receiving props as recognition, you can do someone a prop to help him or her out.

Hats off!- is a phrase often said to graduates wearing the illustrious cap and gown. It has nothing to do with the tradition of tossing hats in the air in celebration. It harks back to the custom of uncovering the head or doffing the hat, as a sign of respect gentlemen remove hats to maintain politeness as advised by Etiquette expert, Emily.

Mazel Tov!- a Hebrew term literally meaning 'good luck'. It is appropriate to shout it at any point during a celebration. It entered English in the 1860s though appeared in the 1600s spelt as 'missal tob'.

2.6 Congratulatory Messages and Advertisement

Newspaper congratulatory messages are different intentions of well wishers that come in different forms: as wishes, prayers urges, information, commitments e.t.c all directed towards communicating a well wish. While some of the messages sound poetic others sound proverbial, religious and in some in some case a combination of all.

Generally, the messages as expressed are assertions at the surface level but each (acts) carries with it unique intentions expressed differently. Some of the messages contain titles like "Congratulations!", 48 hearty cheers to a Friend!", Congratulations on your golden jubilee!", "felicitation!" while some do not contain tittles for example Daily Trust January 10, 2013 and Nigeria Tribune April 5, 2013. Some of the messages are very long while others are short for example Nigerian Tribune June 3, 2013 and Vanguard May 29 2013.

The messages can be regarded as a form of advertisement because of the medium used in conveying the messages: the newspaper which reaches a broad readership furthermore, the messages tend to advertise the senders and their intended recipients because of the features that accompany them for example full names of senders and intended recipients, their photographs and portfolios, full addresses of companies and organizations. To this end, the messages sent

through the newspaper medium is to a large extent, a form of advertisement because they tend to communicate well wishes as well as advertise what they display that is senders, intended recipients, companies, organizations and to an extent, products.

2.7. The Interface between Newspaper Congratulatory Messages and Advertising

Advertisement is a notice telling people about something: a product, job or services. It is the act of advertising something to make it public (in the case of newspaper congratulatory messages, it is to also show its good qualities). Advertising involves paying for space in publications or airtime, then using that opportunity to deliver a message directly to consumers (in this case, consumers will mean intended recipient(s) and the general readership). This message is usually meant to raise awareness and it is directed towards a particular audience. Congratulating on the other hand is the act of sending a message to somebody saying that you are happy about their good luck, success or other achievements. It is expressing oneself in a written or spoken form or a piece of information that you send to somebody when you cannot speak to them yourself. If congratulatory messages carry with them pieces of information, and the aim of advertisement is to create awareness thereby, passing across pieces of information, and they are conveyed through the newspaper medium, then there is a connection between the two.

The interface between newspaper congratulatory messages and advertisement lies in the fact that newspaper congratulatory messages contain some features of advertisement. First, spaces are bought in the various newspapers where the messages are printed, and the opportunities are used to directly deliver the messages to both the intended recipient and the general readership, about the achievements of the celebrated person(s). Second, apart from congratulating the intended recipient(s), it notifies the general readership about the senders and

the good qualities of the intended recipient(s), and to an extent, corporate organizations. Third, the messages are meant to create awareness (in this case about the achievements of the intended recipient(s)). The messages are also directed to a particular person or group of persons (intended recipient(s)) as the case may be and by extension, the general readership.

Therefore, the interface between the newspaper congratulatory messages and advertisement is the fact that newspaper congratulatory messages possess features of advertisement which include publicity and creating awareness aimed at passing across messages to a targeted audience thereby rendering them a form of advertisement, considering the medium (the newspaper) used in conveying the messages to their targeted audiences. Though these congratulatory messages are meant to cheer or celebrate achievements, they also advertise indirectly especially messages sent by corporate bodies. For instance, messages sent from Class Motors Limited "Vanguard, May 4, 2013.",Evans Brothers Limited "Nigerian Tribune, June 3, 2013." MTN "Daily Trust, January 1, 2013.",United Bank for Africa "Daily Trust, January 1, 2013." and Federal Inland Revenue Services "Daily Trust, January 1, 2013."(see appendix) are congratulatory messages but they indirectly advertise the corporate bodies which they represent.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is the concept of Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs) by Bach and Harnish (1979) alongside Searle's(1975) classification of Speech Acts. The two theories have been adopted because they are integrative to the study. The concept of Mutual Contextual Belief is fairly related to the notion of Implicature and it facilitates a streamline inferential process because the inference by the reader depends on the mutual beliefs shared not only on what the senders of the messages write but what they intend it to mean. According to Bach and Harnish (1979), mutual contextual beliefs centre on the speakers

"intention and the listeners inference". A Speech Act is performed with the intention that the listener will be able to understand and identify the intention of the speaker. When this happens, the listener makes an inference, in order words, the listener puts certain facts together that will help him/her recognize the speaker's intention. These facts, which are salient or well known to the interlocutors, are branded "mutual contextual beliefs". Searle's classification of speech acts helps in naming the acts which express senders' beliefs and intentions in congratulatory messages. Therefore these theories have been adopted for this study because they have the pragmatic elements that are suitable for the research thus help in achieving the aim and objectives of the study.

The two theories adopted are relevant to the study in that they provide a theoretical framework on naming the acts and on how the illocutionary acts convey the well-wishes varying intentions, and to understand the mental attitudes of senders of the congratulatory messages. While Bach and Harnish's theory of MCBs provides a a theoretical framework which accounts for readers' attitude in a conversation in order to eliminate ambiguity, that is to select the operative meaning out of all the semantic interpretations that the expressions might have in context thereby, providing the basis for understanding the various mutual beliefs shared between senders and readers in the context of the actual use of language (of congratulatory messages). Searle's Speech Acts Theory on the other hand helps the study in classifying the various speech acts that the congratulatory messages convey in bulk. These various speech acts help in deriving the non literal meanings thereof provide the basis towards deducing certain mutual beliefs that both the senders and the recipients of the congratulatory messages share, and understanding the elements which render the congratulatory messages a form of advertisement.

The integration of the two theories (SA and MCB) in the analysis has aided the interpretation of the analysis in the sense that Speech Act Theory helps in identifying and classifying the various Speech Acts imbibed in congratulatory messages while MCBs in comprehending and identifying the various mutual beliefs which both senders and readers of the message share. SPA helps the readers to understand the various things that people do with words when they speak or write especially in the case of congratulatory messages while MCB helps the readers to understand that when people speak or write, there are certain mutual beliefs that they share and these mutual beliefs facilitate the understanding of the explicit and implicit intentions and meanings, their language usage and world view.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology for this research. It is basically a textual analysis. This approach is adopted because it gives a clear insight into the sense made from the interpretation of written congratulatory messages in newspapers. It also helps in understanding both the obvious and the hidden intentions conveyed in the congratulatory messages and also helps in naming the type of acts performed in the messages. This chapter is divided into four sections as follows; sample, method of data collection, sampling procedure and analytical procedure.

3.1 Sources of Data

Basically, the data for this research is Nigerian newspapers. The period of collection spans from January to June 2013. It is impossible to study all the Nigerian newspapers in a realistic research; therefore, the sample for this research is selected Nigerian newspapers:

- *Daily Trust*
- *Vanguard and*
- *Nigerian Tribune*

The reasons for selecting these newspapers are: they are national newspapers therefore, reflect different values of the Nigerian people, they have a broad readership among Nigerians, the depth of the coverage of these newspapers, the standard of English language used in the newspapers is appreciable, the quality of the writing and the readability of the writing in the newspapers.

3.2 Method of Data Collection

The methodology adopted for the research is qualitative research methodology because the methodology helps the researcher in analyzing the data towards achieving the aim and objectives of the study. The data for this research were collected from pages of Nigerian Newspapers; *Daily Trust, Nigerian Tribune* and *Vanguard,* spanning January-June 2013. The three newspapers have been chosen because they contain congratulatory messages that posses necessary and vital pragmatic elements suitable for the research. The period spans from January – June 2013 because this period contains a lot of celebrations that call for well wishes from well wishers which covers different aspects of celebrating achievements ranging from New Year, Birthdays, Coronation, Democracy Day, Childrens' Day and Office Anniversaries. Well wishes sent as regards those celebrations are adequate for the study because they contain pragmatic elements suitable for the research. Therefore, these forms of celebration are suitable and enough for the research to achieve its aim and objectives. The data reflect the different spheres of life of the Nigerian people, ranging from political, social to cultural endeavours.

3.3 Sample/Sampling Procedure

Random sampling technique was used in selecting the congratulatory messages to be studied. Osuala cited in Baba (2005:18) states that "randomness is from the word used to describe events whose occurrence cannot be predicted individually with any certainty". As sample of selection, randomness means selecting the sample in such a way that is actual composition. The three newspapers reflect different spheres of life of the people ranging from political, economic, religious, social and cultural endeavours, their cosmology, culture and value system. Those elements are vital to the study, thus:

- *Daily Trust: North-central*
- *Nigerian Tribune: South-west*
- *Vanguard: South-west*

Basically, the data for this study are selected Nigerian newspapers *(Daily Trust, Vanguard and Nigerian Tribune)* containing congratulatory messages. A sample of thirty congratulatory messages has been randomly selected for this study (ten each from the three newspapers). Thirty have been sampled because they contain necessary and vital pragmatic elements suitable for the research. The thirty makes the study lucid, comprehensible, more effective and less tedious for both the researcher and the readers. These thirty samples are a representative of the ninety congratulatory messages that have been collected altogether.

3.4 Analytical Procedure

The data analysis is presented in a tabular diagramme of five columns and goes in this order: the serial numbers, the newspapers, the messages, the act types and the mutual beliefs also a brief discussion follows each table. This is done for each of the sample of the data collected. In order to answer the research questions accurately and convincingly, and to also account for the objectives of this study, Bach and Harnish's concept of mutual contextual beliefs (MCBs) is employed to understand meaning from the senders' point of view, through the mutual beliefs shared by both senders and readers of the messages because the performance of an act carries with it intentions that the listener or reader needs to understand the salient intentions in it base on the context. The concept centers on speakers' intentions and the listeners' inference. The study also draws insight from J.L. Austin's aspects of speech acts and Searle's classification of speech acts. This form is adopted by the researcher because it makes the analysis lucid and it gives the readers a clear and better understanding of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data, analyses and discussion on the analyses of the thirty selected messages, (ten messages each from the three selected newspapers) under several sub topics as regards the table of analyses and the study.

4.1 Data Analysis

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
1	Daily Trust, Tuesday, January 1, 2013.	In 2013… let's build Nigeria together Throughout the past year, your taxes worked to make development possible. And today we say a big thank you, while we look forward to another rewarding year of partnership. Happy new year from all of us at FIRS	• Directive- the need to join hands. • Directive-the positive result of development as a result of the customers' patronage. • Expressive- the New Year wishes. • Expressive- the recipient is thanked.	• Both senders and readers share equal understanding of the previous year. • They share the same business beliefs. • Someone outside the context in which the message is written would not understand how rewarding their partnership the previous year was because he/she does not share the same mutual beliefs.

The language is that of flattery and persuasion. Rather than placing Locutionary act straight ahead, which is the well wish (the essence of the message), the same avenue has been used to appreciate the clients of FIRS and notify them of their positive aspect of paying taxes. That however is a form of advertising FIRS and what it stands for. The picture that accompanies the

message symbolizes development. The mutual belief here is business inclined, to demonstrate what their taxes are used for.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
2	Daily Trust, Tuesday January 1, 2013	THIS NEW YEAR REMEMBER TO: CELEBRATE YOU *Have a full-filling* 2013 Happy New Year from MTN Welcome to a new world	• Directive-an urge. • Expressive- a well wish. • Assertive-stating the world as new.	• The senders and their customers share the same knowledge of what the previous year was in the business context. • A customer of another communication network would not understand what went on the previous year for MTN users in the MTN world because they do not share mutual beliefs. • They share social belief.

Using the image of a popped bottle MTN has given an instruction to its customers. MTN is trying to say that the network gives priority to its users therefore it is all about its users celebrating themselves. Is MTN not supposed to celebrate its users rather than the other way round? This therefore is a form of advertising the network rather than mere sending a well wish to its users. The message creates an impression on the reader 'should one use MTN, one's life will be full of celebration' with that impression in mind, users of other networks become aware and enticed by MTN. The language is persuasive and appealing.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
3	Daily Trust, Thursday, January3, 2013	HAPPY NEW YEAR! On behalf of the Management and Staff of the under mentioned companies, we wish you both a happy and prosperous new year. FOVAK NIGERIA LIMITED FNL NIGERIA LIMITED FAZAFAT STORE 08065505080	• Expressive- the New Year wish. • Declarative- on behalf of others, they declare their wish.	• Both the sender and the receivers share experience from the previous year (business dealings). • They share social beliefs which are relationship and wishing loved ones well.

The language is straight forward but a bit patronizing. The companies are trying to patronize Mr. President and wife by intimating them and the general readership that such companies exist. Why place a phone number if not to create recognition, advertise and if not that some Perlocutionary acts are expected that is to establish a business relationship with whoever is interested in any of the companies? It is therefore a form of advertisement.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
4	Daily Trust, Thursday, January10, 2013.	We, the undersigned, wish to felicitate with our boss, the speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon (Dr) Aminu Waziri Tambuwal CFR as he marks his 47th birthday anniversary today. While wishing him more years of good health wisdom and quality service to the people, we pray to the Almighty God to guide and protect him as he steers the affairs of the	• Assertive-the encoder's birthday anniversary • Directive- intimating the decoder about the other encoders. • Directive – a prayer to the almighty God. • Expressive- the recipient has been congratulated.	• They share political, social and religious beliefs because the recipient is a boss to the senders only and not others outside this context. Therefore those outside the context would not understand the kind of boss he is. • The affairs he steers that need God's guidance and protection are known only to the

		people of our dear country. Congratulations, Your Excellency.		people he shares mutual beliefs with. • They share a religious belief that is why the prayer is directed to God and this God is not specified.

The language has elements of flattery in it. It is also emotive and appealing. The mutual beliefs shared are political, social and cosmological. The senders try to seek recognition by attaching a complete list of their names. Each wants to be recognized by the celebrant because probably only a fraction of them has a one on one relationship with him. That is an act of patronage. Why attach a long list of the senders' names if not to create recognition and advertise them?

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
5	Daily Trust, January 10, 2013.	Your faith in democratic culture is the backbone of the stability in the lower chamber of the national assembly since the inception of your leadership. You are very amiable to your colleagues in particular and all democrats in the country because of your doggedness, confidence and assurance that democracy is durable in our country. We, the honourable members of the House Committee on Agriculture, identify with you on your birthday and hereby wish you long life, good health	• Assertive- he is referred to as a good leader. • Declarative- the senders declare their unionism and support with and for him. • Declarative- the durability of democracy as a result of his unique political personality. • Expressive- the senders express their good wishes for the celebrant.	• They share the same political beliefs. Someone outside this political context would not understand the affairs of the lower chamber and how stable they have been. • Only those who share social beliefs would agree that he is amiable to his colleagues. • To say that he is amiable to all democrats is an exaggeration because it is not possible for him to have a one on one relation with all

		and more strength in the service to the nation.		democrats except those he has come in contact with. MCB helps us to understand that fact.

The language is that of flattery and has a lot of exaggeration in it. It is also emotive and appealing, directing him to a future course of action. That is the expected perlocution in it. As an avenue to cheer, it also serves as an avenue to intimate the celebrant and the general readership about certain things. Therefore it is informative and at the same time it advertises the senders by way of creating a sense of recognition of the senders by the celebrant and the readership. It also advertises the celebrant. The mutual beliefs shared are cultural, social and political.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
6.	Daily Trust, Thursday, January 10 2013.	47 Hearty Cheers to Our Speaker On behalf of my humble self, management and staff of the National Assembly, I join millions if Nigerian in felicitating with the speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. (Dr) Aminu Waziri Tambuwal CFR, on the occasion of his 47th Birthday Anniversary being today Thursday 10th January 2013. Mr. Speaker Sir, the last 47 years of your life has been a blessing to humanity, the institution of the National Assembly and	• Expressive- hearty cheers • Informative- intimating the readership about the occasion being celebrated • Informative- intimating Mr Speaker about the last fourty seven years of his life. • Directive-a prayer offered to Allah • Expressive- a well wish	• There is an assumption that millions of Nigerians are celebrating with him therefore, on behalf of others, he joins hands to celebrate. • There is a social belief because birthdays are social occasions meant to be celebrated and others have join in this celebration. • To say that his past years have been blessings to humanity is an exaggeration because the said blessings can not

		the country at large. I therefore, pray the Almighty Allah (SWT) to guide, protect, and you strengthen you the more for a continued service to our fatherland. On your birthday, may every glowing candle be a wish that will turn to reality. We wish you long life and prosperity		be assumed to have been felt, seen or enjoyed by all. • There is also a political belief because if his life has been a blessing to humanity, National Assembly and the country, it means he has lived up to his political responsibility as a result the people are pleased with him because that is what is expected of his office. There is also a world view that a good person should impact positively on others

There is flattery and an exaggerative use of language. How sure is the sender that millions of Nigerians are felicitating with the speaker? One may ask "how many Nigerians are aware of his birthday if not for publicizing it in the media? Referring to the last forty seven years of his life as a blessing to humanity, by implication does it mean that he started making his contributions to humanity right from the day he was born? The sender speaks as if he was there watching and observing the celebrant right from when he was born up to the day of the present celebration. There is a worldview about making wishes with glowing candles. There are shared political, social and religious beliefs. A sense of being subjected is projected.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
7.	Daily Trust, Tuesday, January 1, 2013	UBA United Bank for Africa Happy New Year May this new year bring you abundant joy and happiness Please make use of our convenient, safe and secure e-banking products this season	• Expressive- happy new • Expressive- a well wish for the new year • Directive an urge inform of an advert.	• There is the same cosmology about ending an old year and marking a new one by celebrating it and making good wishes. • They share a common belief that people usually wish for the new year to be better than the old year. That is why the wishes are offered to loved ones. • There is a mutual economic belief. Business men and women usually wish for more effectiveness in their services in order to please their customers. Therefore UBA has upgraded its service by providing convenient, safe and secure e-banking products for their customers for the season.

One means has been used to achieve two aims; the New Year well wish and the advert. The language is simple, straight forward and persuasive. The display of e-banking products and the polite urge to make use of them by customers and others that might get enticed to the products and become customers clearly shows that it is highly a form of advertisement, including the e-

mail and the website for contact and enquiries. The 'you' is not specified therefore makes it ambiguous because it could mean their customers, to-be-customers or the general readership. The medium has been used to achieve two aims; to send a well wish and to advertise. The mutual beliefs here are social and business inclined.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
8.	Daily Trust, Thursday, January 10, 2013	HURRAY MY DEAR SPEAKER, AS YOU CLOCK TWO SCORES & SEVEN TODAY I, on behalf of my Federal Constituency, humility, brilliance, diligence and sterling leadership qualities. As a leader of endearing attributes, you have within a year blazed the trail in legislative leadership and have impressed Nigerians across regions and political lines with your warm heart, which clearly stands you out as a leader for today and tomorrow. May the Almighty Allah grant you many more years of selfless and result-oriented service.	• Expressive- the celebrant is celebrated 'Hurray my dear Speaker' • Informative- the readership is being informed about the celebrated years of the celebrant. • Declarative- the senders declares their joy for the occasion by celebrating the celebrant • Directive- A prayer is directed to the Almighty Allah on behalf of the celebrant, and at the same time an expectation from the celebrant by the senders.	• The celebrant has been referred to as 'dear', that is to show some kind of personal relations between the senders and the celebrant which in turn reflects a mutual social belief. • There is a metaphorical use of language: 'two scores and seven' refers to the forty seven years that he has clocked. Context helps us to understand that. • They share political beliefs because his birthday celebration has been linked to his political duties and achievements. • There is a mutual religious belief because a prayer has been directed to the Almighty Allah for more years of selfless service.

				• There is an exaggerative use of language because it is an exaggeration to say that he has impressed Nigerians across regions. From the use of adjectives, one can infer that the senders are pleased with the political person of the celebrant.

The message is more of advertising the celebrant to the readership than a birthday felicitation. The use of language is a little bit emotive (by using dear) and that of praise but it is more of exaggeration and flattery through the choice of adjectives used. Is it possible that he has really impressed Nigerians? Why is he referred to as the one with a warm heart? Do all Nigerians see him as the one with a warm heart? Through inference one can conclude that the exaggerations are as a result of personal, political and social relationships. It is possible that some Nigerians have not felt his impact at all.

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
9.	Daily Trust, Tuesday, January 15, 2013	OUR ABLE SPEAKER @47 The House Committee on FCT knows that you have all the attributes of Leadership: Focus, Trust, Dedication, Fairness, Integrity, Enthusiasm, Patience, Determination, Oppenness,	• Assertive he is referred to as an able speaker. • Informative- the senders put the celebrant in the know about the knowledge of the House Committee on FCT about his leadership	• There is a political belief shared for him to be referred to as an 'Able Speaker' because being a speaker has to do with his political office. • There is also a mutual social belief for the

		Responsibility, Consistency, Commitment, Discipline, Role Model, Good Relations, Articulate, Dependable, Vision, Honesty, Magnamity, Sense of Humour, Confidence, Reliability, Decisiveness, Courage, Assertiveness, Compassion, Proactive, Resilience, Flexibility, Mentor, Networking, Charismatic, Active Learner. As we celebrate you on your 47th Birthday, we want the Nation to search no more, as it has a true leader already.	attributes • Declarative- that he is a true leader.	senders to be able to c the attributes of leadership displayed by the celebrant. • There is a common world view about leadership that is the attributes a leader should posses. This world view has aided the senders to see these attributes in him. • The mutual belies has triggered off the need for the directive given to the nation to end their search of a leader because they got one already.

The use of language is flowery and has a lot of flattery in it. One could begin to wonder if it is possible for one leader to posses all the attributes ascribed to his leadership. The choice of words is deliberate and it is meant to flatter. Why urge the nation to search no more of a leader? Is he the best of the best or the only person with the best attributes of a leader? It is because it is the senders attempt to flatter the celebrant and to advertise the celebrant to the readership.

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
10.	Daily Trust, Thursday, January 3, 2013	YOBE STATE MINISTRY OF WORKS Congratulations The Hon.	• Expressive- He has been congratulated. • Expressive- the wish for the new	• They share a world view to offer a wish for the New Year. • They share

		Commissioner Yobe State Ministry of Works Hon. Lawan Shettima Ali on behalf of himself and the entire staff of the Ministry heartily congratulate his Excellency the Executive Governor of Yobe State Alh. Ibrahim Gaidam FCNA, CPA on the occasion of presentation of Finance and Appropriation Bills 2013 to the Yobe State House of Assembly on 2nd Jan. 2013 and wishing you and the good people of Yobe State prosperous new year. We in the Ministry of Works wish to felicitate with His Excellency for the beautiful presentation of the people oriented and economic transformation budget 2013. We want to put on record the laudable achievement made by the Government particularly on roads infra structural development which cut across all the nook and crannies of the state and further we wish to assure you that in 2013, areas that have no tarred road will be fully considered. No wonder the Yobe State House of	year • Declarative- his achievements have been referred to as 'laudable' • Commissive- the senders have given an assurance and made a commitment about a future responsibility. • Informative- the senders inform the readership about the course of celebration. • Directive- A prayer is offered to the Almighty Allah.	political beliefs because the achievements referred to as laudable are based on a political ground. • They also share social beliefs because they celebrate the infrastructural developments which are also referred to as social amenities. • There is a mutual belief shared that making first and second reading of the bill is unprecedented in Yobe state therefore, it has made a remarkable history which carries the people along. • There is a religious belief because a prayer is attributed to the Almighty Allah.

		Assembly made first and second reading of the bills instantly which is unprecedented in the history of Yobe State. Once again congratulations for the presentation of a well articulated and people oriented budget and pray for Almighty Allah to enable us implement every part of it within the fiscal year.		

The message tends to be more informative of the celebrant and his political achievements. It sings praises of the celebrant. The use of language is straight forward but a little bit exaggerative. Is it possible for such infrastructural developments to cut across all the nooks and crannies of a state in such a short period of time? The message, to a very large extent, tends to advertise the celebrant and his political achievement.

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
11.	Nigerian Tribune, 3 June, 2013	60+3 Gbossa to the Leader of Leaders Leadership reflects well on you and as we celebrate you today. May the God that you follow, while others follow you never let you down. May His grace be sufficient *Happy Birthday Sir*	• Assertive- the reflection of leadership on the celebrant is testified. • Directive- a prayer to God for the celebrant. • Expressive- the birthday wish.	• 'Gbossa' is a Nigerian cliché, a Nigerian perception. • It is an exaggeration to refer to him as a leader of leaders. • The style of leadership here is being both political and social. • They share religious beliefs because a prayer has been offered to God for him.

The use of language is that of appeal to God and flattery to the celebrant. There is also an exaggeration. The mutual beliefs shared are social, political and religious. The use of the adjective "leader" in the expression "leader of leaders" renders it a form of advertisement, advertising the celebrant as the best and one among many. One might want to ask what makes him a leader of leaders and why do people follow him. The essence is to intimate the readership and to advertise the celebrant to the readership.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
12.	Nigerian Tribune, Monday, June 2013	*Felicitation!* The Board of Directors, Management and the entire staff of Evans publishers Limited felicitate with the dynamic Governor of state of Osun, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola and the good people of the state on the occasion of the Inauguration of Opon Imo project today, June 3, 2013. We are proud to be associated with your Excellency on the Osun Digital Revolution.	• Assertive -he is referred to as dynamic. • Declarative- state how they feel by associating with him. • Expressive- felicitation.	• They share same political beliefs to understand that he is dynamic as a governor. Because someone from another state might not know or accept this fact because he or she does not share in this belief.

There is a flattery use of language. The adjectives used in qualifying the governor directs towards patronizing the celebrants. However, while felicitating with the governor and the people, the message tends to advertise Evans Publishers Limited. Apart from capturing the whole body of Evans in the message, some of its products have been captured in the photograph. Why include some of the limited's products if not to advertise it? Business, social and political mutual beliefs feature.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
13.	Nigeria Tribune, Monday, 4 June, 2013	Happy Birthday Baba, you are COHERENT! Your coherent suggestion brings harmony, unity and integrity between your vision and goals, your desires and discipline in your kingdom is what we are enjoying today. While others spend more time in urgent but not important things, you spend time on important things not necessarily urgent. *Happy birthday your Majesty!* With love from me Engr. Muftau Salawu (MNSE) Managing Director, Opinior Engineering Company Limited	• Assertive- states that Baba is coherent • Assertive- testifies that the coherence has brought about positive achievement. • Expressive- the birthday wish.	• The word 'Baba' is contextual, in the Nigerian context; the word signifies an elderly man. • Referring to him as coherent would not really make sense and matter to someone outside the context, who does not share the same cultural, social and political beliefs with the senders. • It is an exaggeration to say that everyone enjoys and is happy with his style of ruler ship. Through MCB we are able to understand that.

The language is emotive and that of flattery. It also has overstatement. The mutual beliefs shared are cultural political and social. The message has features of advertisement. It tends to advertise both sender and recipient of the message. If not to advertise, why explicitly state achievements of the celebrant "Baba" and also give a detailed portfolio of the well-wisher that is the sender of the message? It is supposed to be a birthday message but it turned out to be a means of information, informing the readership.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
14.	Nigerian Tribune, Friday, 5 April, 2013	Beyond celebrating with you… We celebrate you for being the person you are. Providence has bestowed on you an inexhaustible spring of goodwill that will not cease from blessing others. Because of this, it is our prayer that the lord will not cease from blessing you on this your special day and always. Happy birthday, your Excellency!	• Assertive-names that qualify the kind of person. • Declarative-gratifying the encoder by acknowledging the service he has rendered to his constituent. • Directive- good wishes and prayer in his future carrier. • Expressive-happy birthday wish.	• Celebrating her for who she is would not make sense to someone who does not share same belief with the sender and the recipient. • They share religious beliefs because a prayer is offered to the lord for her. • They share social beliefs to know that and call her birthday special because to others who don't share this belief, it is an ordinary day just like every other day.

Though a birthday message, the avenue has been used to advertise the celebrant by acknowledging her and intimating the readership of her goodness. It is an exaggeration or an overstatement to say "in exhaustible spring of goodwill". The mutual beliefs they share here are social and religious.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
15.	Nigerian Tribune Friday, April 5, 2013	We congratulate you on your birthday, today, April 5, 2013. There is no doubt that you have increased the joy and happiness of less-privilege citizens over the years.	• Assertive- names (adjectives) that qualify his kind of person. • Declarative-gratifying the decoder by acknowledging the services he	• To say that she has increased the joy of the less-privilege citizens is an exaggeration because it is not possible for one person to achieve

		As you celebrate today, our heartfelt desire is that God Almighty in his infinite mercies protect and give you vigour in your unending service to humanity. *Happy Birthday*	has rendered to his constituents. • Directive- the good wishes and prayer for/in his future carrier. • Expressive- the happy birthday wish.	that in such a country as Nigeria. Therefore all the less privilege in the whole country cannot say that they have all enjoyed this said joy. • Only those that share mutual beliefs understand that fact. • The senders and readers share political and social beliefs and the act of rendering services to the people is achieved through a political means. • They share the same religious beliefs because a prayer to the almighty is offered.

The language has flattery and exaggeration in it. Beside the well wish, information has been passed to the celebrant and by extension, the readership. A prayer has also been offered to God. The mutual beliefs shared are social, political and religious. Names of the senders have been attached. That is to say that the senders seek recognition which is also a form of advertising. The senders could use 'your friends' rather they chose to attach their individual names. Why that if not to advertise?

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
16.	Nigerian Tribune, Tuesday, 28 May, 2013	Welcome to Ogun State No one was there when you asked God to Strengthen you with your dreams for our state. Hearty congratulations on the second meritorious anniversary and best wishes for greater successes in the years ahead. -Beneficial kindness & benevolence to the citizens, old and young -Security all over and around the state -Improved electricity & water supply to communities across the state -Unparalleled approach to massive reconstruction of roads and physical infrastructures throughout the state -Education -Health -Agriculture -Environment -Improved Revenue Generation -Very humble and cordial relationships with growing popularity Without a dream, there cannot be a vision. Without a vision, there cannot be a mission.You have left	• Informative- about his unknown prayer offered in private. • Expressive-on congratulating him. • Informative- notifying the readership about the positive benefits (the list of benefits) • Assertive- a two packed statement • Declarative- the acknowledgement of the fact about his mission.	• They share religious beliefs to know that God answers prayers that are offered in private. Also to know that prayers are offered in private for private intentions. • They share political and social knowledge to have expected and also witness the positive changes. • They share the same world view about making successful achievements. • It is an exaggeration to say that he has left no one in doubt because it is not possible for everyone to hold the same view about the discharge of duty as regards his office.

		no one in doubt about your mission to rebuild Ogun State.		

There is a world view that future successes should be greater than past successes, and as a political leader, he needs to do or achieve more every serving year in his office. The language is highly political and it tends to advertise the state right from the title alongside the recipient because of the long list of his achievements that has been attached including pictures of some of those achievements. If not to create recognition, why attach the list and pictures of various achievements? One can infer that he made earlier promises about a certain vision which is to rebuild the state, and he has fulfilled it to an extent. There is an exaggerative use of language. The mutual beliefs are political and social.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
17.	Nigerian Tribune, Wednessday,29 May, 2013	Felicitation! The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of DAG-JEMINAT (NIG) LIMITED felicitate with our amiable and dynamic reformer of our time, His Excellency, Senator (Dr.) Isiaq Abiola Ajimobi, Oyo State Governor and his amiable wife, Chief (Mrs) Florence Ajimobi on their installation as Asare Atunluse and Yeye Aare Atunluse of I badan land by the Olubadan of Ibadanland, HRM,	• Assertive- the adjectives used in qualifying his/her kind of person. • Confirmative- attesting to the fact that the honour is a well-deserved one. • Informative- intimating the readership of the good works the celebrant has carried out in the state. • Expressive- The act of prayer and well wish. • Directive- urging him and hoping that he offers	• Both sender and recipients share a political belief that is why the adjectives are used in qualifying their kind of persons. • They share mutual beliefs for them to attest to the fact that the honour is a well-deserved one. They must have felt the impact of his/her good works. • They share social and political beliefs to make a list of his feasible

		Oba(Dr.) Samuel Odulana Odugade1, CFR, JP. This is awell deserved honour in recognition of your laudable, life transforming and urban renewal programmes that has imparted the people and reposition the pacesetter state. We also felicitate with his excellency on his second year in office and the good works he is doing to transform Oyo State. In the areas of provision of durable roads and related infrastructures vis bridges and flyovers, excellent health care services, sound education, effective transportation system to ease the sufferings of the common man will continue to speak for you. May the Almighty Allah increase you on every side and endow you with greater wisdom as you offer more selfless services to the good people of Ogun State.	more than he has already offered to the state in future.	achievements. The people must have seen and enjoyed the items listed. • They share mutual religious belief to offer a prayer to Allah for increase and wisdom. • They share the same world view to know that he needs to keep up the good works and do more in the future as regards his office. • There is a world view here and a shared knowledge of the sufferings of the common man.

There is a sense of advertisement that runs through the message right from the title. There is a shared belief that as a man of vision, support from his wife has helped him to achieve and realize that. The avenue has been used to celebrate two achievements. They share political, social,

cultural and religious beliefs. To a great extent, it is an advertisement because the sender's name and full address of the company has accompanied the message. One could infer that the illocution is meant to lead to a perloctionary act. There is a flowery use of language.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
18.	Nigerian Tribune, Monday, June 3, 2013	Happy Birthday Sir! We celebrate with a man of the people, versatile leader and our father, as he marks his 63rd Birthday. Over the years, you have proved to all and sundry that the worth of a man is not measured by what he possesses but the positive contributions he makes to the lives of others. Yours is a life filled with kindness, humility, family values and hard work. You have been a mainstay that we rely on for counsel and direction time and time again. This is why we join people of goodwill to felicitate with you on this occasion of your 63rd Birthday Anniversary. Congratulations!	• Expressive- he is wished a happy birthday and he is congratulated • Assertive- the chosen adjectives they use in qualifying him. • Expressive- the things he has done over the years. • Declarative- he is called a mainstay. • Informative- the celebrant has been informed that the senders (and people) rely on him	• To celebrate him by joining others implies that they share social beliefs. • They share a world view about proving the worth of a man. • They share political views to have understood that his contributions are positive. • It is ambiguous to say "the positive contributions you make in the lives of others" because the 'others' here is not specified also "we rely on for counsel" the 'we' is not specified whether it is the whole state or a specific group of people in the state. • There is a world view and a shared belief that holds because it is held that only peo[ple of goodwill celebrate the achievements of others, and the

				senders have chosen to join that category of people to felicitate with the celebrant.

Flattery and exaggerative use of language feature in the message. There is a shared world view about the worth of a man. The mutual beliefs are politically and socially inclined. The 'we' is not specified. Does it refer to the senders or the people that he has once governed? A sense of recognition is created because a long list of the senders has been attached and signed on behalf of one person. The context has been used to pass a political message.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
19.	Nigerian Tribune, Friday, April 5, 2013.	A MOTHER AND A JEWEL! We join you in Glorifying God! The Chairman Governing Council, Prof. Oladapo Afolabi CFR, Members of the Governing Council, Acting Rector Mr. Adebisi Adeniran, Staff asnd Students OF the Polytechnic, Ibadan join your numerous admirers and well wishers in praising God for sparing your life to witness another birthday. Your ingenuity through your various programmes such as Access to Basic Care (ABC), Educate A Rural Child (ERC) and Ajumose Food Bank (AFB) have	• Declarative- she has been declared a mother and a jewel. • Commissive- joining her in glorifying God. • In formative- intimating her in particular and the general public of the positive impact of the good works on the state. • Assertive- stating about her milk of kindness. • Directive- a prayer offered to God. • Expressive- the best wishes.	• They share religious beliefs because they give praise to God knowing that he is in charge of sparing one's life to witness a new day including a birthday. • Religious beliefs also reflected where a prayer is offered to God for protection and further equipment because it is believed that a human cannot achieve this by his own doing except by the grace of God. • There is an exaggeration because it is an overstatement to say that her milk of kindness has been flowing to all and

		impacted positively on the people of the state. Your milk of kindness has been flowing to all and sundry without discrimination. We pray to God to continue to protect and to further equip you with the wherewithal and candour to serve to serve humanity to the best. We also wish you the best of health as you partner with your spouse, His Excellency, The Governor of Oyo State, Senator Abiola Ajimobi in the service of the good people of Oyo State. Happy Birthday Ma!		sundry.

The full address and detailed names of the senders have a sense of seeking for recognition. A list of her programmes that the people have benefitted from is featured. Why that if not to create a kind of awareness to the readership? It is ambiguous to say that "…have impacted positively on the people of the state." Is it every indigene of the state or a particular set of people that attended the programme? There is an exaggerative use of language because it is an overstatement to say that her milk of kindness has been flowing to all and sundry without discrimination. The question is: is it possible especially with human beings? By referring to her spouse as her partner, one can infer that there is a mutual political understanding between her and her husband. There is also a world view that one can achieve or realize ones dreams only if one has good health.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
20.	Nigerian Tribune, Wednesday, 29 may, 2013.	CONGRATULATIONS 2ND YEAR ANNIVERSARY IN OFFICE & DEMOCRACY DAY " Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step to another, forming new wishes and seeing them gratified" SAMUEL JOHNSON May the years ahead bring you greater accomplishments in Nation Building and National Transformation. Congratulations!	• Assertive- reaffirming a reality by quoting Samuel Johnson. • Expressive- a well wish is offered towards nation building.	• By quoting Samuel Johnson regardless of who he is and where he hails from, a general world view about the reality and hurdles of life is shared. • They share political beliefs to know their expectation on nation building and national transformation. A wish is made at the same time a directive is indirectly made to the celebrants.

It is a twin celebration. The introductory part of the message is a quote from Samuel Johnson that is to say that there is a shared belief. The quote presents the celebrants as great, successful achievers that is, to say they have successfully crossed some hurdles in their political pursuits from the second part of the message, one can infer that their primary assignment is captured which is nation building and national transformation, and the wish is channeled to that form of advertisement to an extent because of the logo and name of the sender which is an organization. They share political and social beliefs.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
21.	Vanguard May 4, 2013.	CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GOLDEN JUBILEE! The Management & Staff of Class Motors Limited felicitate with a friend, a valued customer, a detribalized Deltan: Distinguished Senator (chief) Pius Akpor Ewherido as he attains the golden age of 50. We wish to use this unique occasion to convey our gratitude for your support to our establishment over the years and also congratulate you on your landmark achievements at the senate and the sustained empowerment/humanitarian services to your constituents.	• Assertive- names that qualify the kind of person the senders see him to be. • Declarative- gratifying the encoder by acknowledging the service he has rendered to his constituent. • Directive- good wish in carrier. • Expressive- the recipient is congratulated and gratified.	• The social belief shared helps the readers to understand that a 'golden jubilee' stands for fifty years anniversary. • They share same political beliefs which help both senders and readers to understand the humanitarian service rendered because someone outside his constituent might not understand that because he/she does not share same political beliefs. • The adjectives used in qualifying him in the message are political.

The senders of the message tend to patronize the celebrant with a flowery use of language which through inference one can infer that it is aimed at flattery. Even though the message is meant to congratulate, the same avenue has been used to appreciate the celebrant for his support to the senders. Through inference one could conclude that it is aimed towards strengthening business ties. The same avenue has been used to advertise Class Motors because the message carries with it the pictures of some cars and the full address of the company including email and phone

numbers. Through inference one could conclude that it is meant to advertise the company as well.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
22.	Vanguard, Monday, May 27, 2013	CONGRATULATIONS TO A PATRIOT We the kings of Ezechime kingdom, wish to felicitate with his Excellency, RT. HON ROTIMI CHIBUIKE AMAECHI, Governor of rivers state and the Ochialiri 1 of Ikwerre land, on the occasion of his 48th birthday. Your Excellency, We wish to use this occasion to express our profound for the rare honour and privilege you granted our son Chief Chuma Chinye, the Obuzor 1 of Ezechime Kingdom by appointing him as as commissioner in the Rivers State Executive Council. We acknowledge you as a true patriot and a detribalized Nigerian.	• Expressive- the celebrant is been congratulated. • Declarative- a declaration of the senders' felicitation. • Expressive- the senders appreciate the recipient. • Declarative- the recipient is acknowledged and called a "a true patriot and a detribalized Nigerian".	• The salutation is political. • To felicitate with him on such a day means that they share social beliefs. • They share same cultural beliefs because they understand and appreciate the celebrant for what he has done for their own "our son". • To call him a patriot and a detribalized Nigerian signifies that they share same political beliefs.

The mutual beliefs shared are cultural and political considering who the message is coming from and the tittles used in the message. The use of language has flattery and exaggeration in it. Is one act of kindness enough to say that someone is patriotic and detribalised? For a group of kings to honour and recognize someone like that, it means the person is held in high esteem by them. Though a birthday message, the avenue has been used to appreciate a kind gesture of his. Wouldn't they have sent an appreciation message separate from the congratulatory message

since the kind gesture was offered before the celebrated occasion? That is to say that the senders want recognition while they try to advertise themselves and the celebrant. Why include the senders' names, signature and portfolios if not to create recognition and advertise?

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
23.	Vanguard, Monday, May 27, 2013	48 HEARTY CHEERS TO A FRIEND We heartily congratulate you, our dear friend and brother, RT. HON. Chibuike Rotimi Ameachi, CON, Executive Governor of Rivers State as you turn 48 today. You are indeed a patriot, democrat, promoter of peace and development. We wish you happy birthday and many more prosperous years in the service of our nation.	• Directive- to give hearty cheers. • Expressive- the recipient has been congratulated. • Assertive- the recipient has been notified at the same time the general readership has been informed about the forty eighth birthday. • Declarative- he has been called a dear friend, patriot, democrat and a promoter of peace.	• 48 hearty cheers' in this context refers to the number of years he has clocked. To someone who does not share in this belief, it could just mean a number of cheers. • They share the same social belief that is why they refer to him as a friend and a brother because to others that do not share in this belief, to call him a brother would not make sense. • They share the same political beliefs to understand why he is referred to as a patriot, democrat, promoter of peace and development because those that do not share in these beliefs would not understand why.

The language has flattery in it. One can infer that by the flowery use of adjectives to describe him. He is called a 'friend' and 'brother'. On what ground is he called brother and friend if not to patronize him? The senders end up creating recognition and advertising themselves by attaching a long list of their names. There is a political mutual belief; the wish for many prosperous years not just to live and enjoy life but to serve the nation.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
24.	Vanguard, Wednessday, 29 May 2013	CONGRATULATIONS! With hearts full of joy, I, Hon. Chairman of Bekwarra Local Government Council and on behalf of the leadership and good people of this council area join our compatriots all over the nation to rejoice with His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, GCFR, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; the Vice President, His Excellency, Arc. Namadi Sambo; the Governor of Cross River State, Hiz Excellency, Senator Liyel Imoke and his Deputy, His Excellency Barr. Effiok Cobham for another successful year in our democratic journey. We are confident that the nation has competent hands in you to move us forward. We pray for God's strength and grace to enable you translate our vision of	• Expressive- the recipients have been congratulated. • Commissive- the senders agree to join hands to celebrate with the recipients. • Assertive- the senders claim of their confidence in the recipients. • Directive- A prayer is offered to God for strength and grace.	• The sender and the others referred to as compatriots share the same political and social beliefs to understand the success of the just completed year. • They share religious beliefs because they belief that there is a God and so they offer a prayer to God believing that it is God who grants them sustainability and will also grant the reality of their vision.

		development into concrete and sustainable reality.		

The use of language has a bit of flattery in it. By congratulating on behalf of the leadership and good people, the sender tries to seek recognition not only of himself but of his colleagues and other people of the council. It is possible that the 'leadership' and 'the good people' are not aware of this development yet they are mentioned. They share social, political and religious beliefs.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
25.	Vanguard, Wednesday, May 29, 2013	CONGRATULATIONS! With hearts full of joy I Hon. Gabe Idagu Ugor, the Executive Chairman of Yala Local Government Council and on behalf of the leadership and good people of this council join our compatriots all over the nation to rejoice with His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, GCFR, the President of the federal Republic of Nigeria;the Vice President, His Excellency, Arc. Namadi Sambo; the Governor of Cross River State, His Excellency, Senator Liyel Imoke and his Deputy, His Excellency Barr. Effiok Cobham for another successful year of our democratic journey. We pray for God's strength and grace to enable you translate our vision of development into concrete and sustainable realities	• Expressive- the recipients have been congratulated. • Commissive- the senders agree to join hands with the recipients. • Assertive- the senders claim of their confidence in the recipients. • Directive- a prayer is offered to God for grace and strength.	• The sender and the others referred to as compatriots share the same political and social beliefs to understand the success of the just completed year. • They share religious beliefs because they belief that there is a God and so they offer a prayer to God believing that God will grant him sustainability.

The message is the same with the one above. Only the name of the sender has been edited. That shows the ingenuity of the message, and that is to say that the essence of the message is not just the goodwill but to seek recognition. The use of language has a bit of flattery in it. The mutual beliefs shared are social, political and religious.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
26.	Vanguard, Wednessday, May 29, 2013.	CONGRATULATIONS Our Dear Governor 14 years of uninterrupted democratic rule no doubt presents a very unique opportunity to rejoice with you. You have made us proud remaining resilient and focused in transforming Delta State, giving hope to the hopeless and making life more meaningful to all through your numerous projects and initiatives. We wish you more successes as you pursue the course of making life better for Deltans. Happy Democracy Day	• Informative- intimating the readership of the reason for the celebration. • Assertive- by stating that he has transformed Delta State. • Expressive- a wish for success.	• They share political beliefs to know that the democratic rule has been uninterrupted for fourteen years. • It is unique because in other states there has been several interruptions like religious crises but it has not been so with Delta State. It is an exaggeration to say that he has made life more meaningful to all. • They share political beliefs to have seen and understood the dividends and impact of his office as governor. They also share political and social beliefs to understand that he needs to be more successful in his pursuit that is why they wish him more success.

The use of language is emotive. By referring to him as 'dear' one could begin to wonder how dear he is and to whom, all or just the senders. Although, a well wish it designed like a letter to the governor. It is a national celebration though, but the senders feel it is the best opportunity to rejoice with him over Delta state. Rather than sending a well wish to the governor the senders go ahead to be informative directly to the celebrant and indirectly to the readership. One could infer that the senders are trying to showcase their governor alongside the senders because their full names and picture have been attached. There are shared political and social beliefs. The language is exaggerative. Even though the senders are pastors, no prayer is offered in the message.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
27.	Vanguard, Wednessday, May 29, 2013	Felicitation to An Achiever of Excellence 6yrs Anniversary ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTOF NIGERIA, (ALGON) JIGAWA STATE CHAPTER On behalf of Local Government Councils Chairmen and Councillors Cogratulates His Excellency, the Governor of Jigawa State, ALHAJI (DR) SULE LAMIDO (CON) on his fruitful 6years anniversary as Governor of Jigawa State No doubt within the period under review the state has witnessed tremendous rural transformation that has ranked the state Number one in Local	• Assertive- the tittle of the message. • Informative- intimating the readership about the rural transformation. • Commissive- the senders commit themselves to a future course of action, promising to remain loyal and to associate with him. • Assertive- they call the style of his leadership exemplary. • Expressive- he has been congratulated.	• From the title of the message, one can deduce that they share social and political beliefs for the senders to know that he has achieve excellence and call him an achiever of excellence. • They share political and social beliefs because he has carried out his political duties therefore, the political expectations of the people, the said rural transformation has come to a reality. • The people are pleased with his style of leadership that is why they say that it has put

		Government administration, through prudent financial management of public funds. We will remain loyal to you sir, and will continue to associate with your exemplary leadership style that has put smile to all. Congratulations!		smiles to all. Through MCB one is able to know that. • It is an exaggeration to say that his style of leadership has put a smile to all because it is not possible for all to smile at it, others will frown at it because different people want different things differently.

He is called an achiever of excellence. Is it possible that he personally achieved excellence alone? Why are the others not recognized? One could infer that the association (ALGON) is pleased with his discharge of duty that is why they pledge their loyalty to him. That is to say that they wish to continue working with him. The message has an emotive and exaggerative use of language. It is an exaggeration to say that he has put a smile to all. Is it all the members of the association or the whole state knowing the fact that there would be an exception to that? They share social, political and economic beliefs.

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
28.	Vanguard, Monday, 27 May, 2013	HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO A GREAT LEADER @48 Your Excellency you have shown through your tract records in life, especially in governance that age is just a number. Keep the light shinning as you celebrate	• Expressive- his good records have been acknowledge • Assertive- Affirming the saying that "age is just a number". • Directive- urging him to keep the light shining. • Expressive- he has	• They share political and social beliefs to know his good records in governance. • For the sender to affirm that age is just a number simply means that there is a common belief shared and

		another great year of accomplishments. Congratulations our amiable Governor on your BIRTHDAY.	been congratulated. • Assertive- the use of the adjectives 'great' and 'amiable' to qualify him.	world view

By referring to him as a 'great leader' and 'an amiable governor they try to portray a picture of him already. By his tract of records in life one could infer that the bad records he might have alone are not a part of it. By saying that his age is a number, one could infer that he has achieved great things at this point regardless of his age. The people must have been benefactors of his service that is why he has been urged to keep the light shining. This light is not any ordinary light that one knows rather, there is a metaphorical use of language here to refer to the great things he has done that are of benefits to the people which has been the case in the previous years. Though a birthday message, the avenue has been used to achieve a political aim. There is a flattery use of language. It is also a form of advertising both sender and recipient of the message in order to create recognition. They have the same world view and they share political and social beliefs.

S/No	**Newspapers**	**Congratulatory messages**	**Speech acts**	**Mutual contextual belief**
29.	Vanguard Wednesday, May 29, 2013.	Goodwill Message On behalf of myself, Hon. (Barr.) Legor Idagbo, And my family, I rejoice with your Excellency, President Goodluck Jonathan, Vice President, Namada Sambo and all Nigerians on this historic occasion of the nation's 14^{th}	• Declarative- his intention of sending the message • Assertive- he refers to the day as great and the occasion as historic • Informative- giving information on what the nation has gone through	• They share social beliefs because it is believed that well-wishers cheer or celebrate alongside. • There is a mutual belief to refer to the day as great and historic. It means the day is different from other days and has

		Democracy Day Anniversary. Also, I rejoice with your Excellency, Senator (Dr) Liyel Imoke, Executive Governor of Rivers State, Deputy Governor, Barrister Effiok Cobham, and all Cross Riverians for witnessing this great day. The nation has certainly gone through rough waters but this is typical of every nation that has a great destiny. I pray God to give you more wisdom to move our dear state and nation to an enviable state. Once again, Happy Democracy Day	• Assertive- affirming the fact that it is typical to go through such for a great destiny • Directive- expecting more positivity from him towards the state in the future.	something significant that makes it historic. • It is a mutual belief that for a nation or someone to be great, one or the nation has to go through a lot which the metaphor 'rough" has been used for. • They share religious beliefs for the sender to acknowledge God and pray to him for more wisdom. Mutual beliefs help us to understand that one cannot achieve greatness and wisdom by his own doing except by the grace of God.

That the day is great means that there is something spectacular about it. They share a world view there that greatness comes after hardship which is the case of Nigeria. It is a national celebration, why then congratulates only four rulers including Riverians? Are they the only ones that witness the day in the country? One may infer that the president and the vice president symbolize other Nigerians. Therefore, this is to say that the sender is trying to create recognition by these four important rulers.

S/No	Newspapers	Congratulatory messages	Speech acts	Mutual contextual belief
30.	Vanguard, Monday, May 27, 2013.	Goodwill Message Your Excellency, as Nigerians, today mark 14 years of uninterruptible democracy in our beloved country, we want to put it on record that history and posterity will not forget your immense and unequalled contributions to our successful democratic journey as a nation. We at the Benue State of Finance and Economic Planning are proud of you. As staff and manage-ment of a pivotal ministry in your administration, we are proud of your achievements as Governor of our dear state in the last six years. Indeed, your development agenda as encapsulated in the "Our Benue Our Future" working document of your administration has firmly positioned our state on the pedestal of sustainable economic growth and development. Your determination	• Informative- the contributions he has made has been mentioned and acknowledged • Expressive- They are proud of him • Informative- notifying him of the positivity of the development agenda • Expressive- hailing of the Governor, Benue state and the Federal Republic of Nigeria.	• They share mutual political beliefs to know that the democracy is uninterruptible and to also know the said unequalled contributions. Someone outside the country might not understand how uninterruptible democracy has been in the country and the immense contributions he has made except one that share in that belief. • For them to be proud of him, he must have done something or things that have pleased them or that they have gained from. • There is a mutual religious belief because they belief that blessings and guidance comes from God and it is God that can see him successfully through the coming years. It is an

		to transform the landscape of our state through the provision of various development projects has undoubtedly brought us to an era of infrastructural transformation and economic prosperity, There is no gainsaying that we are proud of you and your accomplishments as a true Democrat and Statesman. May the Good Lord continue to bless and keep you and your family even as He prospers your endeavours in the years ahead! LONG LIVE GOVERNOR GABRIEL SUSWAM! LONG LIVE BENUE STATE!! LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA!!!		exaggeration to say that they are all proud of him because there must be exceptions to some of the people that are proud of him.

There is a flattery use of language to refer to his contributions as 'unequalled' and 'immense'. The senders have used the avenue to acknowledge the dividends of his office. They both share religious, social and political beliefs which render the language of the message highly political. One could infer from the prayer made, that the senders still hope that he would do more than he

has done. There is a shared world view here that once there is life, there is hope for a better future.

4.2 Discussion and Interpretation of Data

The interpretation and discussion of data is done under the following subheadings; Discourse and Context, Mutual Contextual Beliefs, Speech Acts, Inference, Newspaper Congratulatory Messages and Advertisement. Under each of the headings, the data are randomly selected and discussed. The essence of this is to reveal the intended meaning of senders in the message and the mutual beliefs that both the senders and the readers share with the help of the context in which the messages have been sent.

4.2.1 Discourse and Context

The data revealed that the discourse of congratulatory messages and the context in which they are written determines the interpretation of the data.

The context (occasion) in which the messages are written is of great importance because it was known to be used to pass across goodwill message of various kinds to different people. Some of the messages contain topics and these topics suggest the purpose of the discourse for example, 'CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GOLDEN JUBILEE' (see appendix). Having the knowledge of the topic and context has to a large extent made the data analysis easier. The theme of the discourse is the basis of the actual message of the senders and the recipients, their social roles, personal attitudes and intentions. The personal relationship established through reading context from the immediate tenor, while the under tenor is the expected role that the society extorts to the sender. The tenor of the discourse plays a vital role when reading congratulatory messages because it buttresses the social roles and intentions of the sender when sending these messages which is anchored by a well wish in a formal context. The mode of discourse is a

medium used as a channel of communication i.e. written for the purpose of this work, the medium is the speech. Speech is important in social activities including sending written congratulatory message in newspaper because this study is based on written congratulatory messages (written speech) of the sender to the recipient (intended) and other readers (non intended recipients).

4.2.2 Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs)

The data reveal that it is not only important to know or understand what the senders of the message with statement contained in their written congratulatory message mean but also in what context. This is because context determines the interpretation of congratulatory messages. Senders of congratulatory messages are part of the users of language in a speech community. And as user of language they are a part of the world usage. They are never alone In their use of language as members of a speech community (Mey 2001;114). In most cases, users of the language operate within the social convention that is familiar to other users of language in a speech community. Mey (2001) and saeed (2003) assert that the society or a speech community contains institutions and bodies such as marriage, market, religion, legislative, judiciary and other institutions that are legalized and this legalization is symbolically represented by the language use. Therefore, when one hears certain word and sentences one can easily relate it to a particular social convention in the society. For example "Throughout the past year, your taxes worked to make development possible" "…We look forward to another rewarding year of partnership" (message 1, *Daily Trust*, Tuesday, January 1, 2013) "please make use of our convenient safe and secure e-banking products this season" (message 7, *Daily Trust*, Tuesday, January 1, 2013.)" implies business convention. This enforces what Stubbs (1983;1) says that "as soon as we start to study how language is used in social interaction, it becomes clear that

communication is impossible without shared knowledge and assumption between speakers and hearers". Senders and recipients of written congratulatory messages operate within a social context when the sender and the recipient write and read the messages respectively. The senders use, and the readers recognize certain expressions that point to a particular social convention. When readers (intended and none intended) read these messages, that are linguistic expressions, they tend to relate them to the social convention where they are often used because they are part of that speech community. This is because the choices of words that are used are particular to a social convention."60+3 gbossa to the leader of leaders" (message 11, *Nigerian Tribune*, 3 June, 2013.) Gbossa is a word usually used in the Nigerian context to salute or to hail someone on occasions of achievements. Here it has been used on the occasion of birthday. "…on their installation as Asar Atunluse and Yeye Aare Atunluse of Ibadan land" (message 17, *Nigerian Tribune*, Wednessday, 29 May, 2013.) The social convention here is that of coronation in a Yoruba Land.

Lyons (1979;572) also states that the theoretical notions of context not utterance is based upon a pre theoretical notion of context, which is intuitive rather than observational. In other words, readers as part of the users of language and knowledge they have about the world, make them intuitively able to distinct the context of the congratulatory messages, and thus the intentions behind them."Congrats on your golden jubilee","…we wish to use this unique occasion to convey our gratitude for your support to our establishment over the years and congratulate you on your landmark achievements at the senate…" (Message 21, *Vanguard*, May 4, 2013.) Though a well wish on his birthday, another intention is conveyed in the message which is meant to strengthen business ties. Moreover certain linguistic expressions, utterances or lexemes can be traced to particular social convention such as seen in court gatherings,

classrooms and other settings. This is why it is also possible for us to know when certain linguistic expressions are appropriate or inappropriate or that is more or less effective than another in certain contexts.

Some of the linguistic features and deictic expressions used in congratulatory messages reveal the settings of the texts which are quite familiar to the readers, such as “congratulations”, “felicitation” and even without seeing them in congratulatory message in newspapers a reader can easily guess that they were written by a well-wisher. Nevertheless, the knowledge of the context of situation where the messages are written, and the people who wrote them, help in giving appropriate interpretation to the congratulatory messages. For instance (see message 29, *Vanguard*, Wednesday 29, 2013) the occasion is Democracy Day celebration, the sender is in the political pursuits with the recipients. The sender and the recipients hold political offices, that is to say they have a common interest.

Stubbs (1983) observes that language and situation are inseparable. According to him, we often know what kind of language to expect in different situations and, conversely given a fragment of language, we can reconstruct in some detail the social situation which produces it. Certain linguistic features in the congratulatory messages serves as pointers to the context of discourse that senders and recipients take for granted as explained above. Context also tends to determine language especially in different social situations. Written congratulatory messages are clear instances of this, the languages employed in writing them point to their context such as Coronations, Birthdays, Democracy Day, and New Year celebrations. They are used by the senders to express good intentions that are interwoven to celebration of achievements and successes.

Mutual contextual beliefs come as a result of the shared knowledge about the world, shared values or beliefs, shared cultural beliefs and shared knowledge about language usage and communication. The data analysis makes it clear that assumption about the world, about communication and about linguistic meaning shared by senders and readers helps in interpretation of the text and in assigning to them their appropriate meanings (see appendix *Daily Trust*, Thursday, January 10, 2013). The senders assume that their readers are aware of the context, so they take it for granted while constructing their congratulatory messages. To understand the implicit intentions of the congratulatory messages, there is a need to bear in mind both the linguistic and situational contexts of the written congratulatory messages and how they contribute to the meanings generated from the congratulatory messages. It is equally important to understand the assumptions about the mutual contextual beliefs taken for granted in the communicative process.

Mutual contextual beliefs play an inevitable role in the interpretation of the written congratulatory messages; this is because the MCBs determine to a large extent not only the interpretation got from the written congratulatory messages but also the rationality of the texts (see appendix, *Nigerian Tribune*, Friday, April5, 2013.) Little wonder Bach and Harnish (1979) state that the inference made by the decoder and the inference he/she takes himself/herself to be intended to make is based not just on what the speaker says but also on MCBs that is salient information from the context known to both sender and receiver or writer and reader as they noted, the contextual beliefs that feature in encoders' intention and decoders' inferences must be mutual if communication is to take place. Thus for the intentions conveyed in the written congratulatory messages to really communicate the intended and hidden meaning the MCBs need to be relied upon in deciphering what the statements in the congratulatory messages

actually mean by their writers. For instance "60+3 gbossas" simply means sixty three salutes, (the number of his years) to the celebrant on his Sixty Third Birthday (see appendix).

The mutual belief shared by the sender and the receiver in this situation is celebration of achievements: well wishes for the intended receiver of the message In question. Birthdays, promotion and other achievements that call for celebrations are events or ceremonies in which a person achieves something good while well-wishers support the achievement by sending their good will messages formally, especially in newspapers, that is to felicitate or to pronounce them happy. It is on this basis that other specific MCBs are drawn as shown from the textual analysis. That is to say, from a broader point of view, the first thing that comes to a readers' mind both intended receiver and other readers is felicitation (the felicitation of achievement or success). However, to each congratulatory message as shown in the analysis, there are specific MCBs that reveal the background on which the senders that wrote them seem to be coming from. For instance, the message of *Nigerian Tribune*, Friday, April 5 2013 (see appendix) shows that the senders are religious inclined. Therefore, the specific MCB is that the witnessing of one's birthday is attributed to God's miraculous deed and not man's own doing or effort. Thus, the general contextual belief "felicitation" helps the reader arrive at the specific MCBs based not only on the linguistic meaning of the words used but also on their world knowledge of anniversary celebration and the linguistic expressions peculiar to birthdays and other anniversaries.

Another relevant shared knowledge revealed from the analysis is that achievements are celebrated irrespective of the religion and the culture of a person or people. These accounts for the reason why some of the congratulatory messages reflect religious and cultural beliefs (i.e. Christianity, Islam and tradition) while some of the congratulatory messages were written on

neutral grounds which influence the interpretations that are given to the congratulatory messages. Message 23, Monday, May 27, 2013 is written on a neutral ground, no reflection of any form of religion (see appendix).

The MCB also made it possible to see that the senders of the messages were involved in a kind of written interaction aimed at communicating the same messages in different and unique ways (felicitation/goodwill) to the intended receiver and other readers. Therefore, the various statements in the messages were perceived as acts and not mere statements. The congratulatory messages expressed different illocutionary acts and these acts were tied to the intentions the senders wish to express for the intended receiver, ranging from acknowledgements, commitments prayers, urges and so on and so forth.

4.2.3 Speech Acts

To determine the effectiveness of communication, the ability of the reader or listener to interpret correctly not just the writer's or speakers' message but also their intention has to be considered. Bach cited in Encyclopaedia of Philosophy states that in saying something, the speaker intends more than just to communicate but to get oneself understand the intention of the speaker because without a proper understanding of the speaker's intention, it is not possible to understand the words as speech acts or illocutionary acts. Searle (1975) refers to statements as speech acts by describing language as an intentional behaviour which should be treated like a form of action because it is the basic unit used to express meaning. Speech acts are not just used as mere words; they are used in most cases to perform actions. The senders of congratulatory messages write these messages with the aim of communicating intentions which they want their receivers and other readers to be aware of. These intentions are tied to illocutionary acts because it is the intentions that determine the illocutionary acts they perform in the messages. The

intention brings about the illocutionary force that is used to write the messages. The illocutionary force is determined from the manner the words are presented in the messages, that is if what is written will come as an acknowledgement, assertion, wish, request and so on and so forth. In essence the illocutionary force determines the illocutionary act that is performed.

The congratulatory messages were written to express well-wishers' different states of minds and attitudes to their intended recipients' achievements or successes which were expressed as statements in form of prayers, assertions and so on. The propositional content of the congratulatory messages mostly expressed as depicted from the written text were reflected as wishes, prayers, promises, declarations, affections, support to achievers. These in turn determine the acts that were performed these are representatives (also known as assertives) expressives, declaratives, commissives and directives.

It was established from the analysis that written congratulatory messages are used to perform different illocutionary acts which are tied to the well-wishers' intentions triggered off by the celebrants' achievements. They were performed as direct acts because they were used in stating something or asserting something. They were also used to convey deeper intended meaning which were implicit in the messages than the surface interpretation gotten from them. They were also used to convey indirect acts going by the situational context. Therefore the acts that were performed are both direct and indirect. The data revealed that expressive, representatives, declaratives, directives and commissives (according to their frequency) were used in conveying well-wishers' intentions or messages to their loved ones or friends. To give a detailed interpretation, these speech acts are discussed separately.

4.2.3.1 REPRESENTATIVE

Representatives also known as assertives as act types performed in the congratulatory messages appeared twenty six times, according to the data. These speech acts are assertions about a state of affairs in the world and this carry the values “true” and “false”. This determines their direction of “fit” in order to match the world to be true. Gathered from the data, the congratulatory messages were representatives because they represent the ‘supportive’ state of mind of the senders through their expressed prepositions. The representatives were mainly the direct illocutionary acts that were performed in the congratulatory messages because the congratulatory messages were basically statements that were used in writing the messages. Two meanings can be drawn from these illocutionary acts: literal and non- literal meaning. The illocutionary acts are called the secondary illocutionary that were performed because they convey the literal meaning of the congratulatory messages. Meanwhile, the non –literal meaning is drawn from the literal meaning of the congratulatory messages. Meanwhile, the non-literal meaning is drawn from the literal one because It is inferred based on the situational context of the congratulatory messages. Bach and Harnish (1979) confirms the view by stating that the success of the second that is indirect act is tied to the first direct act that is for the second to be understood, the first must be recognized.

The congratulatory messages show the acknowledgement of the achievements and successes been celebrated and the (strengthening of relationship) bond between the senders and the intended recipients of the messages but the messages cannot be said to be true or false because they only show the good intentions, subjective and objective views of the senders of the messages towards their recipients. The statements they write in the messages are used to represent what they feel towards their recipients and their various achievements or successes.

Representatives were primarily the acts that were performed at the surface level of the text. However the expressed intentions and deeper meanings from the mutual contextual beliefs, the rationality of the text and the inference drawn from them express more than just asserting something.

4.2.3.2 EXPRESSIVES

Expressives constitute the major part of the acts that were performed in the text. According to the analysis, they appeared thirty three times. Searle (1977) states that expressives are meant to express the psychological state of a speaker. Mey (2001:121) expatiate thus "expressives express the inner state of the speaker". The expression is essentially subjective and tells us nothing about the world. Therefore the criterion of fit cannot be said to operate. Expressives are known to be characterized by congratulating, thanking, acknowledging, condoling and so on, for example' congratulations to the leader of leaders'(see appendix).

The data shows that expressives are the major acts alongside representatives that were performed in the congratulatory messages. This is because expressives are psychological and has to do with emotion of the senders towards their receivers that is the attitude of the senders towards the achievement/success of their receivers, their religious and to an extent their cultural beliefs about celebrating achievements and successes, their good intentions and well wishes, desires, prayers for their intended receivers' successes and achievements. Some of the expressive acts performed are religious inclined because they reveal religious beliefs of the senders due to the fact that some of them were religiously inclined and came in the form of acknowledging God: acknowledge God's supremacy, appreciating God and praying to God for blessing, good health and so on for example, 'We pray for God's strength and grace to enable you translate our vision of development into concrete and sustainable reality' (see appendix).

4.2.3.3 DIRECTIVES

Directives as act types revealed in the data appeared nineteen times. According to Searle (1975) this speech act embodies an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something that is to direct the hearer towards achieving some goal. The direction of fit the speech acts represent is world to words. Directives are reflected in some of the statements contained in the congratulatory messages as shown by the analysis. These speech acts came in form of suggestions, encouragement and advice. By suggesting, encouraging and advising, the senders used their words to direct their recipients and other readers towards a course of action. Some of the congratulatory messages were used to show support and to encourage some of the recipients and other readers as well as to perform a particular course of action in most cases, to do more or improve upon a previous action and to suggest new ways for improvement. For example, a celebrant who has used ones office diligently and yielded dividends that were seen and enjoyed by his subjects and other people.

4.2.3.4 DECLARATIVES

Declaratives also constitute part of the major acts that constitute the speech acts as contained in the congratulatory messages. It is J. L. Austin's original category. This speech acts changes the state of affairs in the world were by it makes something that was not to be. In Searle's view declaratives bring about some alternation in the status or condition of the referred object or objects solely by virtue of the fact that declaration has been successfully performed. In the data, the declaratives can be said to be successfully performed because they were made by well-wishers and well-wishers are the rightful people to perform such acts in the context of celebrating successes or achievements. For instance, Daily Trust, January 10, 2013 (See

appendix) by declaring their unionism and support for the celebrant, it makes the union stronger and builds more confidence in the celebrants about the union (other members).

4.2.3.5 COMMISSIVES

Commissives are the least acts that appeared in the congratulatory messages. According to the data analysis the commissives commit the senders to perform some future act. According to searle (1975) the direction of fit in this case is from world to word that means that senders use these written congratulatory messages as a way of getting the reality of the world to conform to their words. Mey (2001) states that commissives operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation on the part of the speaker, in this case, the sender. The forms of commissives include volunteering, agreeing, offering, promising.

Commissives expressed in the congratulatory messages came in form of promise, support or agreeing over a state of affair or future course of action. The congratulatory messages that fall under commissives where a statement is made thus "*In 2013… let's build Nigeria together"* the sender commits himself by making that suggestion which would lead to a future course of action by parties, the sender and the intended receiver. According to the data, it has been revealed that by agreeing to join hands with the celebrant in building the nation, a commitment has been made to a future course of action.

4.2.4 INFERENCE

The implicit meanings that is, the non-literal meanings that were drawn from the congratulatory messages were inferred from the literal or explicit meaning, the illocutionary acts performed, the context in which the acts were performed, and the mutual contextual beliefs. Readers have to rely on clues and hints within the messages in order to understand the implicit meanings of the messages, since the messages meant more than they communicated directly at

the surface level, because readers do not have a direct access to explore the senders' minds. It is the clues and hints within the messages alongside their situated context that will guide the readers in making the right references in the proper understanding of the messages.

The linguistic and contextual information help the readers of the congratulatory messages to infer meaning to the text. Saeed (2003) states that a hearer (reader in this study) infers by combining the linguistic and contextual information to create meaning. The linguistic knowledge in this study focuses on the linguistic meaning of the words used in constructing the written congratulatory messages. Linguistic meaning has been described as compositional. The illocutionary force deduced from the linguistic structure of the toast made it possible to infer the illocutionary acts that were performed since the linguistic meaning of the congratulatory messages defined the illocutionary acts that were performed.

At the surface level, the congratulatory messages are statements used in stating something therefore, can be described as assertives or representatives under Searle's classification. However, the same linguistic structure (structure of congratulatory messages) made it possible to infer that the congratulatory messages were not only mere statements but they were also used to express implicit intentions which resulted to indirect illocutionary acts inferred on the linguistic structure of the congratulatory messages that conveyed the non-literariness of the texts.

This confirms what Bach and Harnish (1997) state that the success of the second act (indirect act) is tied to the first (direct act) and therefore, for the second act to be understood or comprehended, the first must be recognize. That is to say that to arrive at the hidden or implicit intentions of the senders of the messages, there is need to first of all understand that the written

congratulatory messages were statements used to say something before going deep to the non literal meanings they convey.

It is worthy of note therefore, that the congratulatory messages can be described as different assertions about different things, sub zoomed under felicitation but they do more than just asserting, they posses deeper or implicit intentions which were recognized by asking such questions as;

- Who made the statements (who sent the messages)?
- Why were the statements in the messages made?
- In what context were the statements made?
- To whom were the statements made or directed?
- Why were they sent through the medium which conveyed them? e.t.c

These questions revealed the fact that apart from asserting something, the senders were also expressing, committing or directing themselves and their readers to various future courses of actions.

The linguistic structure of the messages alone does not sufficiently express the senders' implicit intentions since for one to arrive at the non-literariness of the congratulatory messages one needs to put other extra linguistic features in mind for example, the context and the mutual beliefs shared in order to draw appropriate inference. For instance *"60+3 Gbossa to the leader of leaders"* (see appendix),would be given the word to word or literal meaning, or may conjure a call to salute the intended receiver without revealing the actual context or the actual meaning of those words which is his sixty third birthday. Therefore the linguistic structure focuses on the surface meaning and also serves as a means of deriving at the non-literal meaning of the

congratulatory messages which the well-wishers seek to express since meaning and interpretation is tied to the linguistic structure. Little wonder Kurland (2000) observes that:

> Readers construct meaning by what they take the words to mean and how they process sentences to find meaning. Readers draw on their knowledge of the language and of conventions of social communication. They also draw on other factors, such as knowledge of the author… the occasion, or audience. They infer instated meaning Based on social conventions, shared knowledge, shared experience and shared values. They make sense of remarks by recognizing implications and drawing conclusions.

According to Bach and Harnish (1979) the inference made by the hearer (reader in this instance) and the inference he takes himself to be intended to make is based not on what the speaker (the sender in this instance) says but also on mutual contextual beliefs. This mutual contextual beliefs result from shared knowledge about the world, mutual beliefs about certain linguistic expressions such as the ones used in the congratulatory messages and our experiences in life. They aided in understanding messages like "…The God you follow while others follow you…" which carry additional meaning apart from the linguistic meaning of the contents. This confirms the fact that the congratulatory messages were not just mere words but senders' different intentions, wishes, prayers, desires, thoughts, admiration e.t.c that results from the relationships of various assertions.

Inferences were also got from the congratulatory messages through the use of various deitic expressions some of which include *"This new year", "your faith", "you are", "we", "May his grace", "The board of directors", Your majesty", "our dear friend" god Almighty"* e.t.c formed references that point to a person, people, events and ideas, alongside it gave credit to shared knowledge outside the written text.

4.3 Findings

Thirty congratulatory messages in three different newspapers were analysed and from the analysis, the research has made an attempt to show how Pragmatics as a branch of Linguistics and a field of study has clarified written text such as written congratulatory messages in newspapers. It has also analyse the types of pragmatic acts that occur in them, the extent to which both senders and recipients of the messages share mutual belief, the extent to which the messages are forms of advertisement and the use of language alongside the kind of context that feature in the messages. Thus the study reveals the following:

- the fact that the text reflects worldview and value system of both the senders and the recipients.
- that the relevance of context gives credibility to the acts performed in the messages. The importance of context is also reflected in the language use through the use of words like "*kudos", "congratulations", "hearty cheers" and "gbossa"*. Without the knowledge of context some of the words could be given different interpretations in the phrases they are used. The occasion, the senders and the reason for sending the messages form and enhance the knowledge of the context and play a vital role in the interpretation of the intentions and expressions in the congratulatory messages. The congratulatory messages are written against the context of congratulating. It is important to first determine the context of the text before determining the acts that are performed as that has help in assigning proper meaning to the congratulatory messages.
- that inference is tied to MCB. The MCBs are drawn from shared knowledge or views about offering support and encouragement in celebrating people's successes and

achievements and from the use of certain linguistic expressions that form or serve as pointers to the senders and receivers of the messages.

- the messages (written congratulatory messages in newspapers) convey unique intentions expressed in different ways rather than just mere statements. These intentions are obviously positive: those of good will and well wishes. The intentions are conveyed pragmatically through the different use of structure and diction by the different senders of the congratulatory messages. They are use to convey the senders unique and various intentions. Despite the unique styles, structure and intentions in the messages, the messages are all geared towards communicating an intention; a well wish, but in different ways to their readers. The intentions contained in the messages are positive: those of good will. Though the main reasons for sending these messages are to express well wishes however, some senders use the medium to appreciate, commend and compliment the intended recipients of the messages.
- that congratulatory messages sent through newspapers are forms of advertisement to a very large extent because the senders of the messages are aware of the medium and the fact that the messages will reach a broad readership yet they go ahead and adopt the newspaper as their preferred medium. Some of the messages tend to advertise both the senders and recipients of the messages because they contain photographs, portfolios, full addresses and in some cases, phone numbers of senders. Written congratulatory messages can be described as written conversation because the congratulatory messages are written as a kind of discourse aimed at communicating unique and relevant well wishes or messages to their readers (recipients) both intended and non-intended.

- that speech acts are not only performed in speech situations but also in written texts such as written congratulatory messages. Some of the congratulatory messages are religiously inclined, some are politically inclined, and some are business and culture inclined while others are implied.
- the language use in congratulatory messages differ from the language use in other speech situations such as hospital, classroom, courtroom and market because the language use in the text is geared towards what expressed the senders' good intentions towards the achievements and successes of others. The congratulatory messages came in form of wishes, prayers, compliments, confirmation, information and acknowledgement, urge, commitment and so on, in a way to reflect celebration of achievements and successes. The diction and sentence structure vary from simple to complex sentences to phrases based on what suits or describes the intentions of the senders towards the readers. The choice of words especially those messages that take the form of prayers reflect the various religions of the senders. Some of the messages contain vernacular words to reflect the ethnicity of the senders like names of places and tittles.
- that to successfully perform an act, it must be related to a social convention and must be performed within a social convention. Some of the act types contained in the congratulatory messages are explicitly stated while some are implicitly stated. The intentions of the senders contained in all the messages are tied to the illocutionary acts they perform which are classified under the five types of speech acts as stated by Searle in his classification of speech acts; representatives (assertive), commissives, declaratives, expressives and directives.

- inference is also a vital part of communication because natural language is usually not in most cases, explicitly stated as interlocutors must poses the ability to infer from the literal meaning what the non-literal meaning is.
- the issue of solidarity features in most of the messages because such messages have been sent on grounds of solidarity therefore, posses such features, especially those that are business and politically inclined. Examples include messages one, nine, nineteen, twenty and so on (see appendix).

To briefly summarise the findings; the language of newspaper congratulatory messages as a form of advertisement is not so persuasive and exploitative per say. It rather has excessive flattery than persuasion and it presents over information. There is an excessive use of adjectives, to describe the celebrants as well as advertise them. Presupposition runs throughout the congratulatory messages. Two types of context exist in newspaper congratulatory messages; that of celebration and that of advertisement. Newspaper congratulatory messages do more than just congratulate. They are also use as an avenue to inform both the intended recipient and the readership as well as offer prayers for the celebrated. They are forms of advertisement which the senders use as an avenue to seek recognition by the intended recipients as well as the general readership. Also in most cases, they are use to showcase the intended recipients. Repetition of the same message signifies ingenuity and the senders' intention to seek recognition and feel among, rather than really express their minds. Most of the senders tend to inform or be informative about certain things to the intended receiver and the general readership.

Speech acts in congratulatory message largely depend on intentions and context, and the relationships that booth the sender(s) and the intended recipient(s) share. The language of newspaper congratulatory messages can be subsumed under language of advertisement and

politics, though not solely, because it demonstrates relationship between aspects of advertisement, culture and politics to bring about awareness to the readership. Most of the messages have been sent on grounds of solidarity (for instance in the case of Tambuwal), especially the politically and business inclined ones.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises the study, draws conclusion on the study and recommends areas for further studies.

5.1 Summary

The study is a pragmatic analysis of congratulatory messages in selected Nigerian dailies. The study aimed at examining the various Speech Acts embeded in the congratulatory messages and the Mutual Contextual Beliefs that feature in them, taking its scope from three different Nigerian newspapers: *Daily Trust, Nigerian Tribune* and *Vanguard*, produced in different parts of the country. The Literature Review is divided into Conceptual Review and Review of Earlier Studies: The Conceptual Review consist of literature around the major concepts that are central to the study including definitions of terms while the review of earlier studies reviews earlier works related to the study. It also contains Brief History of Print Media in Nigeria, Brief History of Some Congratulatory Words and the Theoretical Framework.

The study adopts an eclectic framework; that is the use of two theories: Mutual Contextual Beliefs and Speech Acts Theories to aid the analysis and to illustrate the findings. Three different Nigerian Newspapers containing congratulatory messages were used in the collection of data from a Media House and Libraries in Kaduna and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria respectively. The study tabulated the data based on the alphabetical order of the Newspaper names and their dates of production. The study has established that Newspaper Congratulatory Messages contain several Speech Acts in them which are directed by the intentions of the

senders and also contain mutual beliefs which aid the comprehension of various intentions (explicit and implicit) contained in the messages.

The study has also established that speech acts in newspaper congratulatory messages depend on intentions and the relationships that both the senders and the intended recipients share. Also, the messages can be subsumed under language of advertisement and politics, though not solely but because it demonstrates relationship between aspects of advertisement, culture and politics, to bring about awareness to the readership.

5.2 Conclusion

It has been gathered from the study that illocutionary acts are tied to the intentions of the senders of the messages that is the well-wishers because their linguistic expressions are tied to their state of mind. They choose to express their state of mind through the newspaper medium.

Generally, the study has supported the fact that pragmatics can be used to clarify written text just as seen in the analyses. The study has described written congratulatory messages as speech acts even though they are written statements; they are used to perform different types of acts. The congratulatory messages can be generally referred to as expressive but in these expressives are other speech acts therefore; they can be referred to as acts within an act. The good wishes or good intentions of the senders to their intended recipients are interpreted by the understanding of the context of situation and the acts performed in the messages: assertive, commissives, declaratives, directives and expressives.

The study has shown the types of pragmatic acts that occur in written congratulatory messages. It has shown the extent to which the senders of the messages achieve their desire by using the newspaper medium as a means of sending these messages which reaches a broad readership. Also, the pragmatic impact these messages create which arouse a sense of cheer and

encouragement in readers and the extent to which shared mutual beliefs between senders and recipients of these messages enhance the understanding of the meaning especially the implicit meaning contained in the messages. The study also supports the fact that newspaper congratulatory messages are to a large extent a form of advertisement because of the extra linguistic and aesthetic features that accompany the messages.

Therefore, Newspaper Congratulatory Messages are well wishes that contain several speech acts and hold different mutual beliefs. The speech acts in congratulatory messages largely depend on intentions and context and the relationships that both the senders and the intended recipients share. Though these messages are written differently based on the context (occasion of celebration) and the intentions of the senders, they all point towards expression of goodwill. The senders have other motives attached to the goodwill messages. Those motives or desires are achieved to a great extent through the written Congratulatory Messages which both the intended recipient and the general readership get to read and become aware of. The congratulatory messages are a form of advertisement to a great extent because of the language and adjectives used in them alongside the aesthetic values attached to them. Though in this type of advertisement, the language is not so persuasive like other media commercials but it is full of flattery, ingenuity and over information

Two types of context exist in congratulatory messages: advertisement and celebration. Congratulatory Messages have a lot of mutual beliefs because both senders and recipients alongside the general readership of congratulatory messages share certain cultural, political, religious and social beliefs alongside a world view and language usage and communication. This knowledge helps in the interpretation of the written texts. MCBs determine to a large extent not only the interpretation got from congratulatory messages but also the rationality of the text.

The language of newspaper congratulatory messages can be subsumed under language of advertising and politics though not solely but because it demonstrates relationship between aspect of advertisement, culture and politics, to bring about awareness to the readership.

Going by the analyses, the messages can be grouped as follow: seven are business inclined, six are culture inclined, and twenty four are politically inclined, while twelve are religious inclined (three on Islamic grounds because of the use of *"ALLAH"* while nine are not specified because of the use of *"GOD OR ALMIGHTY GOD"*). Most of the messages, especially the ones that are politically and business inclined have been written on grounds of solidarity.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies

However, this study has been narrowed down to the concept of MCB and speech acts in analyzing written congratulatory messages. It does not exhaustively cover all other areas of study that can be used in analyzing and discussing written congratulatory messages. Therefore, other researchers interested in this aspect can do an analysis using the following aspects; do a discourse analysis, look into the maxims of conversation to see the extent to which the senders of these messages violate the maxims or not, look at the syntactic structure of the messages and the use of deictic expressions which are omnipresent in congratulatory messages.

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