

A LEXICO-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE GHANAIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

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Abstract

This paper analyzed Ghana national anthem. The study adopted an explicit content analytical method which involves a qualitative method of data presentation and analysis. With insights from Blutner's (1998) Lexico-Pragmatic theory and Austin's (1962) & Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory, this study examined the language of the national anthem of Ghana and points out the inherent pragmatic connotations of the lexical items. The analysis revealed several pragmatic implications of the words used in the anthem which can only be interpreted in the Ghanaian context. It is hoped that the findings of this study will draw attention of all Ghanaians to the wordings of the national anthem and encourage them to see the need to develop positive attitude towards Ghana in order to enhance Ghana's national development/growth.

Key Words: Ghana National Anthem, Lexis, Pragmatics, Speech Acts

1.0 Introduction

Varied functions of language are manifested in its use in various endeavours of the society such as communication in the mass media, health care delivery, education, law and politics. Mwinwelle (2020) posits that language is flexible and has elastic edges which provide users the opportunity to maneuver it in order to interpret their psychological states or thoughts. Various groups of people therefore use language as a unifying force to pull their members together in order to achieve their collective aims. Continents, international organizations, nations, political parties

and other institutions are bonded by their commonality of core values and mission articulated through language use.

One of the things that give a country a unique identity is an anthem. Anthems play important role in showcasing the identity, mission as well as ideology of any given country, institution or people. Anthems perform numerous functions, which include a source of pleasant solidarity, and an identifier. In fact, some authors have described anthems as bonding icons (Agu, 2016; Mwinwelle, 2020; Mwinwelle et al 2021), while others have described them as powerfully effective modes for the expression of identity (Morris, 1938). “Anthem”, derived from a Greek word “Antiphora” (against voice), is a song performed in a responsorial fashion. It is a praise song made for mutual interpretation and is composed to expressively boost collective identification through the medium of voice and sound. The song promotes patriotism and inspires conscientiousness in the listeners and readers (Mwinwelle et al, 2021).

An anthem is essential because it awakens members to value the purpose of an establishment. The words of an anthem are “the words that must always be sung, that have always been sung whose words and tune seem like permanent signs thereby making entities like nations appear permanent” (Kellen, 2003:166). The historical, cultural, and social foundations of a state are reflected in its national anthem. This suggests that all national anthems are ideologically motivated. One of such cherished anthems is the Ghana national anthem composed by Dr. Philip Gbeho. The Ghana national anthem reveals certain unintended but clear elements of pragmatic associations with the use of lexical items carefully selected, crafted and engrafted to keep the cultural values and norms as symbol of power and a united front to protect the Ghana nation. Therefore, the overall aim of this study is to carry out a lexico-pragmatic analysis of the

Ghana's national anthem with a view to revealing the inherent undertones (meanings) in the anthem. This is to strengthen and encourage a positive attitude and a sense of pride among Ghanaians in reciting the anthem. Again, the need to examine what is in Ghana national anthem has been necessitated by the negative attitude of some Ghanaians to the national anthem. Most often, some journalists in their field work try to ask people on the street to recite the national anthem and some will respond "I don't know it." while others even ask "What has it got to do with me?" This clearly shows how detached and unconcerned some Ghanaians are to the national anthem. It also shows lack of understanding towards the wordings of the anthem and the sense of pride it supposed to convey.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

Many studies have been conducted on anthems of various countries and higher institutions of learning across the world. For instance, Amenorvi & Grumah (2019) thematically examined the national anthems of five English-speaking West African countries including Ghana. The results revealed that the content and style of anthems from nations with a common history, common language ancestry and geographic location as the selected five countries are similar. Also, Ayinuola (2020) explored the lexicalization of 'Ideology' in national anthems of selected African states – East, West, North, South and Central and the result was not far from Amenorvi & Grumah's finding. Alo & Ayinuola (2017) explored how certain anthems of African states use language and discourse to construct national identities. The study claimed that different lexicalization is used to explain national ideologies and concluded that national anthems reveal collective memory, socio-political and religious upheavals that are specific to African nations.

In Ghana, Mwinwelle et al (2020 and 2021) have done a thorough transitivity analysis of anthems of selected universities and

technical universities in Ghana respectively. Amenorvi & Okyere (2019) examined public universities anthems in Ghana and Opoku (2022) explored how the anthem is used as a site for marketing higher educational institutions in Ghana. So far, not much has been done on Ghana's national anthem especially from the lexico-pragmatic point of view. This study attempts to bridge this gap by highlighting the hidden meanings and inherent Ghanaian connotations in the national anthem through pragmatics and speech acts lens. The aim is to encourage patriotism among Ghanaians and also to encourage schools to sing the anthem with conviction and comprehension and recite all the 3 stanzas of the anthem instead of the first stanza that is only recited. Ultimately, it is believed that the findings of this study will add to the existing body of literature from the lexico-pragmatic perspective.

3.0 Review of Literature

3.1 Lexis

As a linguistic concept, lexis refers to the vocabulary of a language. It stems from Greek language which means "word" or "speech" (Schmitt, 2011). Lexis refers to the entire set of words that could exist in a language or a specified subset of words that are categorized according to certain linguistic characteristics. Lexis sentences are statements in English that link words together and reveal the grammar of the language. A collection of idioms, phrases, and words from linguistic texts and spoken data is called Lexis.

According to Jackson & Amvela (2000), the terms lexicon, lexis, and vocabulary are interchangeable. They argue that vocabulary/lexis encompasses not just syntax and morphology but also phonetics, phonology, semantics, and lexis (that is, vocabulary). The treatment of lexis in the history of modern linguistics has significantly changed by acknowledging to a greater extent, the significant and central role of words and

lexicalized phrases in the mental representation of linguistic knowledge and in linguistic processing (Nordquist, 2019).

3.2 Pragmatics

The Greek word “pragma”, which means “stuff”, “object” and “activity”, is where the name “pragmatics” originates. This usage can be traced back to 1930s when the early philosophers who were interested in the study of semiotics (science of signs) and how verbal descriptions may be used to convey the meaning that “signal” convey coined the term. Therefore, semiotics was divided into three branches: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The word “interpreter” was used to describe the aim of pragmatic research and the pragmatic study centres on the examination of meaning from the user-based angle (Horn, 1984). The speaker’s intention determines the purpose of the statement and the expected outcomes. The fact that what speakers mean frequently goes beyond the exact meaning of what they say, is a fundamental aspect of human communication. Pragmatics is often viewed as a type of intention recognition that entails inferentially reconstructing the meaning that the speaker had in mind and wanted to convey, beyond the literal meaning of an utterance (Grice, 1975; Levinson, 2000).

Therefore, pragmatics is the study of the conditions of human language uses determined by the context of usage. Mey (2001) asserts that it is a systematic way of explaining language use in a context in which its meaning cannot be found in the plain sense of words or structures. Therefore, pragmatic study explores components of meaning which are derived not from the formal qualities of words but from the usage of utterances and their interactions with context. So, every definition of pragmatics strives to reach a certain conclusion which is the influence of context on the speaker’s mode of expression and the hearer’s interpretation/understanding of an utterance.

3.2.1 Scope of Pragmatics

It is important to note that the definition of linguistic pragmatics as it is used now is much more constrained than it was when Charles Morris initially coined the term in 1938. Semiotics, which is the broad study of signs and symbols, captured Morris's attention and later, he broadened pragmatics' purview to encompass psychological, biological, and sociological processes that arise in the operation of signs (Levinson, 1983; Israel et al, 2023). Today, linguistic pragmatics mostly dwells on those factors of language use that govern the choices individuals make in social interaction and the effects of those choices on others (Crystal, 1987). The factors include Deixis, Speech Act Theory, Conversational Implicature, Conversational Maxims, Relevance, Presupposition, Applied Pragmatics, and General Pragmatics. We shall examine presupposition and speech acts as they have direct relevance to this study.

3.2.2 Presupposition

The concept Presupposition is derived from the Latin word "suppose" which literally means "to put under", from sub ("under") (Khadir, 2022). In a simple term, presupposition is something assumed to be true in a sentence which asserts other information. It can also be considered as what a speaker presumes in stating a particular sentence as opposed to what is stated. To Lagodekhi, (2016), presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance. He explains that speakers, not sentences, have presuppositions. He considers presupposition as a closely related concept to Entailment and argues that entailment is something that logically follows from what is asserted in an utterance. He emphasizes also that sentences, not speakers, have entailments. He further explains that presupposition and implication are related though different and are indistinguishable as well. This is because presupposition

usually focuses on the analysis of pragmatic meaning while implication pays attention to logical and semantic relevance.

Leech (1981) suggests that presupposition raises the problem of how to construe the connection between semantics and pragmatics. Chao (2022) views presupposition in terms of the meaning articulated by the discourse. He made a distinction between presupposition and implicatures and posits that if there is a sentence meaning A, there must be a sentence meaning B, but implication is included in the assertion scope of the sentence which is the basic information.

3.2.2.1 Types of Presupposition

Some scholars believe that presupposition is purely semantic and others think it is pragmatic in nature. Strawson as cited by Stalnaker (1974) further expands this distinction and avows that the basic presupposition relation is between a person and a proposition. A person's presuppositions to him, are the propositions whose truth he takes for granted and often unconsciously, in a conversation, an inquiry, or a deliberation. Sayyidah (2021) in a paper titled *Presupposition in Kim Nam Joon's Speech*, conducts a descriptive analysis of the speech. The major objective of her study was to know the types of presupposition in the speech and to find out the most dominant types used. Her study reveals four types of presupposition: existential presuppositions, lexical presupposition, non-factive presupposition, and structural presupposition.

1. Semantic Presupposition

Semantic presupposition in the opinion of Khadir (2022) is a condition deducible from the denotation of a sentence that must be true for that sentence to be either true or a false proposition. He exemplifies this in the utterances in which (a) presupposes (b) as in: **(a) John's son is a dentist and (b) John has a son.** Again, according to Van Fraassen, cited by Smith &

Yu (2021), sentence A semantically presupposes sentence B, just in case B is true whenever A is either true or false. To them, if A presupposes B and B is false, then, A is neither true nor false. They elucidated that presupposition is a semantic relation between two sentences; it does not directly involve the speaker or the listener or the context in which the sentence is uttered.

2. Pragmatic Presupposition

According to Khadir (2022), Pragmatic presupposition is a condition that is essential for a sentence to be implicit in a given context and so, it is a priority of a speaker. In a related development, Yule (2006) emphasizes that pragmatic presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the situation prior to making an utterance. In the opinion of Smith and Yu (2021), to presuppose something as a speaker is to take its truth for granted and to assume that the audience does the same. They conclude that the notion of presupposition must be relativized in relation to linguistic contexts in the sense that statements about presuppositions will not be of the form “A presupposes B” but “A presupposes B relative to X”.

3. Presupposition Trigger

Saeed (2009) argues that many semantic presuppositions are formed by specific words (lexical items) or grammatical structures. These lexical items according to Gençtürk (2018), are called presupposition triggers. He uses the formula: “>>” to stand for “presupposes”. In line with this position, he argues that the utterance: “Jane came again >> Jane came before” and that one of the most common triggers used is “again” as a signal to say that there is a presupposition.

3.3 Speech Act Analysis

Speech acts (also referred to as illocutionary acts or illocutionary speech acts) are those acts performed by a speaker which includes making statements, asking questions, issuing

commands, giving reports, greeting, and warning (Searle, 1969). The theory of speech acts starts from the assumption that the minimal unit of human communication is not a sentence or other expression, but rather the performance of certain kinds of language acts, such as requests and promises. For example, the communication of a request by a speaker, S, to a hearer, H, is an attempt by S to get H to do something. This communication is called successful if H does perform the requested act. It is essential to any specimen of linguistic communication that it involves a linguistic act. It is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol or word or sentence, or even the semantic meaning of the symbol or word or sentence, which is the unit of linguistic communication, but rather it is the production of the meaning in the performance of the speech act that constitutes the basic unit of linguistic communication. Precisely put, the production of the sentence meaning under certain conditions is the illocutionary act, and the illocutionary act is the minimal unit of linguistic communication.

Speech Act Analysis (SAA) of utterances is typical a study of language use with its focus on the intentions for making such utterances. However, since the linguistic elements used have their conventional meanings in the language in which they occur, there has always been the need to consider the interplay between the conventions of the language as the circumstances within which the utterances are made which gives credibility to understanding what the speaker intends the listener to hear. Bach (2014) postulates that such way of studying a text was built upon Jakobson's (1960) work, but was primarily inspired by Wittgenstein's philosophical theories which placed premium on language use. Jakobson had described six functions of language: referential, emotive, conative, phatic, metalingual and poetic: and

their relational factors which operate these functions. The factors include addresser, addressee, message, contact, code and context. However, the contemporary use of the term ‘Speech Acts’ is traced back to John L. Austin. Speech Act Theory (SAT) was first developed by J. L. Austin in a series of lectures at Oxford University on *How to do Things with Words* (Austin, 1962; Osoba & Sobola, 2014). Austin was advancing a philosophy of language that directly critiqued the prevailing notion that “to say something ... is always simply to *state* something” (Austin, 1962).

To Austin, philosophers had been neglecting the “utterance-as-action” (Masaki, 2004:28) aspect, which he categorizes as *performative sentence* or *performative utterance*. Austin presents some cases in which an utterance functions as action:

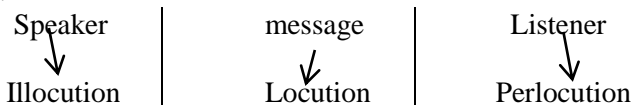
1. admitting to accept a woman as one’s wife by saying, *Yes, I do*, in a wedding ceremony;
2. naming a ship the Queen Elizabeth by saying, *I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth*, with a bottle smashed against the stem.

Proposing that uttering a sentence includes actually doing things, Austin makes a distinction between constative and performative. The former is an utterance-as-description view – that is, utterances are used to describe the world. The latter is an utterance-as-doing view. Performatives do not *report about* doing something, their utterance actually constitutes performing an action, that is, performatives are themselves a kind of action whose utterance brings about some result. Because performatives are actions, they cannot be considered to be either true or false but only “felicitous” or “infelicitous”. Austin, thus, postulated that utterances do more than reflect meaning; they get things done (Littlejohn, 2009). The theory explains linguistic meanings in terms of the use of words and sentences in the performance of speech acts. This is in contrast with theories that maintain that linguistic expressions have

meaning in virtue of their contribution to the truth contributions of the sentence where they occur.

Speech Acts can be analyzed at the following levels: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. These acts include both the semantic and pragmatic aspects of any meaningful utterance. The locutionary act is the actual utterance and its ostensible meaning. This is an act of constructing an utterance by following grammars and vocalizing the sentence. For example, if a person says to you, *You can't do that*, the locutionary act is to construct a sentence that literally means that you cannot do that by making relevant physical sounds. The illocutionary act is the pragmatic 'illocutionary force' of the utterance. It is the utterance's intended significance as a social valid verbal action. In this sense, one actually performs an act in uttering the sentence. Searle (1969) explains that the illocutionary act is the conventional relation between the utterance and the intention of the speaker. That is to say that to understand language, one must understand the speaker's intention. The perlocutionary act is the actual effect, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, otherwise getting someone to do or realize something, whether intended or not. Masaki (2004) explains it as that which one tries to accomplish by uttering a sentence. That is, by saying the sentence, *You can't do that*, the speaker stops you from doing that.

We can draw a relationship between such classification of speech acts and the three key components of communication, namely the speaker (addresser), the listener (addressee) and the message. Diagrammatically, this relationship could be represented as follows:



(What the speakers means to convey)	(The actual utterance)	(The intended effect of the message of the speaker on the listener)
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Fig1: Comparison of Speech Acts and Elements of Communication

Among locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) focus on the importance of illocution and extend their analysis by making a distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts: “illocutionary acts are conventional acts; perlocutionary acts are not conventional” (Austin, 1962:120). In order to perform an illocutionary act, the speaker must rely on the socially accepted convention without which the speaker cannot inspire a social force into his or her utterance. In other words, it is conventional in the sense that at least it could be made explicit by a performative formula. On the other hand, a perlocutionary act is an effect of the illocutionary act. The consequential effects of perlocutions are really consequences, which do not include such conventional effects as, for example, the speaker’s being committed by his promise (which comes into the illocutionary act). This distinction is reflected in whether a person performs an act in-saying (illocutionary act) or by-saying (perlocutionary act). In an illocutionary act, “in saying *I would shoot him* I was threatening him,” and in a perlocutionary act, “by saying *I would shoot him* I alarmed him” (p. 121, italicized mine).

Austin, then, reached the bold conclusion that a description of situations or a statement of facts is merely one type of illocutionary force. He further presented five general classes of illocutionary forces of utterances, including verdictives,

exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives. Verdictives can be observed when juries, mediators, or judges, for instance, are giving a verdict. They also include “estimate, reckoning, or appraisal” (p.150). Exercitives are related to executions of right, authority, and influence, such as order or designate. Commissives are those by which the speaker is obliged to do some acts by uttering the sentence, e.g., promise or intend. Behabitives are concerned with attitudes and social behaviors, such as congratulate or curse. Expositives clarify the way utterances fit the proceedings of conversation or arguments, including describe, accept, or explain. For Austin, illocutionary acts are based on the existence of convention, while perlocutionary acts are not.

4.0 Methodology

This is a qualitative study which adopts a descriptive textual analysis. Ghana national anthem was downloaded from the internet and analyzed using Blutner’s (1998) lexico-pragmatics theory and Austin’s & Searle’s Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Lexical pragmatics investigates the lexical pragmatic mechanisms responsible for the differentiation between linguistically encoded meaning and transmitted meaning on the level of words and phrases. This becomes useful because of the fact that the speaker’s meaning is not often fully reflected in the linguistically encoded meaning. According to Blutner, the study of lexical pragmatics aims to provide a methodical and explicative account of pragmatic events associated with the semantics under specification of lexical elements. The two bases of the lexico-pragmatics model are conversational implicature and lexical semantics. While lexical semantics focuses on word meaning, conversational implicature describes the relationship between what is meant in dialogue and what is said. This showcases the fact that the meaning of a word is frequently pragmatically

adjusted and refined in a context to reflect meanings that a speaker intends to communicate, leading to a statement that differs from their lexically encoded sense.

5.0 Data Presentation

The Ghana National Anthem

Stanza One

God bless our homeland Ghana,
And make our nation great and strong,
Bold to defend forever,
The cause of Freedom and of Right.
Fill our hearts with true humility
Make us cherish, fearless, honesty
And help us to resist oppressors' rule
With all our will and might forever more.

Stanza Two

Hail to thy name, O Ghana.
To thee we make our solemn vow;
Steadfast to build together
A nation strong in Unity;
With our gifts of mind and strength of arm,
Whether night or day, in mist or storm,
In every need whate'er the call may be,
To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.

Stanza Three

Raise high the flag of Ghana
And one with Africa advance;
Black star of hope and honour,
To all who thirst for liberty;
Where the banner of Ghana freely flies,

May the way to freedom truly lie
Arise, arise O sons of Ghanaland,
And under God march on for evermore.

6.0 Analysis and Discussion

The national anthem is divided into three parts corresponding to each stanza. The first part is “the plea” closely followed by “the pact” and then “the peroration” generally referred to as being constructed in three octets, each octet forming a stanza. Generally speaking, an anthem has the ability of informing, persuading, convincing and changing the minds of people towards a particular cause of action. This is where pragmatics becomes pertinent.

Each stanza of the anthem contains 8 lines and in many parts of Africa, the number 8 signifies a new beginning (Amadi et al 2016). Therefore, the 24-line three-stanza anthem represents a refreshing newness in Ghana land after the independence in 1957.

6.1 Analysis

(a) Stanza One

Line 1: “God bless our homeland Ghana”,

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (praying/pleading)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (requesting)

Perlocution: The effect of this is that God in His infinite mercy should grant abundant blessings and Grace to all Ghanaians and their entire land.

Context

Situational Context: Here, God is viewed as omnipotent and can bring Grace to all Ghanaians in their homeland.

Mental Context: There is a shared knowledge among Ghanaians about God and the blessings He is capable of granting to all citizens of the country.

Implicature: This line flouts the conversational maxim of quantity where God has unlimited powers to shower multitude of blessings on all Ghanaians. The citizenry believe in the supremacy of God and that He loves them and therefore can bless the entire Ghana land, ‘homeland’ and provide its needs.

Presupposition: The first line presupposes that there is a supreme being over mankind known as God who is capable of blessing and cursing the country.

Line 2: “And make our nation great and strong”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Requesting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Asserting)

Perlocution: The effect of this line is that through the blessings requested in the previous line, God will transform the country into a great and strong nation.

Context

Situational Context: Under the circumstance, God’s intervention will transform the country, Ghana to a powerful nation in the world that cannot be easily defeated.

Mental Context: It is the belief of the speaker that with God, nothing is impossible and so, Ghana will one day, be a great and a strong nation in the face of its neighbours.

Implicature: This line violates Grice’s maxim of quantity in the sense that the greatness and strength of Ghana’s homeland is colossal and unimaginable. The country is expected to grow and develop in leaps and bounds and become unparalleled among its neighbours.

Presupposition: This line presupposes that there exist a nation Ghana and that God will cause it to be transformed into a mighty and a strong one.

Line 3: “Bold to defend forever”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Asserting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Offering)

Perlocution: The effect of this line is that Ghanaians should be bold to forever defend their homeland without any fear of intimidation.

Context

Situational Context: This is a call on all citizens to stand up to the task of fighting and defending the country against any form of attack. Here, the speaker who represents the country extends a hand of invitation to all citizens to come together and fight for a common cause of action.

Mental Context: It is a shared responsibility for every member of the country to come together so as to boldly defend it against any form of aggression. There have been attacks from other countries seeking control over Ghana’s resources. Therefore, all citizens are duty-bound to fight against these attacks at all times.

Implicature: This line flouts the maxim of quantity. Ghanaians are called upon to stand up and boldly defend the nation against any form of invasions from the colonial masters especially after gaining the independence. There is no reason citizens should yield to the pressure and subjugation from any country at any time. During the period of colonialism, the Europeans scramble for resources through wars. Therefore, the line called on all well-meaning Ghanaians to stand up against this deprivation.

Presupposition: This line presupposes that Ghanaians do exhibit fear and cowardice in the face of danger. Therefore, there is the need to call on the citizens especially the youth to shake off all forms of cowardice and brace up to bravery so as not to bow to any external pressure but boldly defend their nation at all times.

Line 4: “The cause of Freedom and of Right”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Stating)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Pledging)

Perlocution: The effect is that nationals of the country will fight for their freedoms and their fundamental human rights. They will not allow their freedoms to be curtailed by the colonial masters anymore because of their greed and selfish interest.

Context

Situational Context: In the face of oppression, citizens are willing to fight against any form of invasion from an external nation and boldly defend their basic freedoms and human rights bequeath to them by God.

Mental Context: The people are fully aware of their fundamental freedoms and rights as citizens but the colonial rulers deprived them of these rights and freedoms. They are therefore, challenging every citizen of the country to stand up and defend the country against this deprivation that happened in the past.

Implicature: This line again, flouts the maxim of quantity where rights and freedoms take centre stage. During colonialism, the colonial masters forcefully denied Ghanaians their rights of freedoms. Having collectively fought against colonialism and gained independence, Ghanaians are being challenged to unite and defend the country against any further oppression.

Presupposition: The line presupposes that there exist some freedoms and rights enjoined by every individual and thus, Ghanaian citizens will fight for theirs too as heroism.

Line 5 & 6: “Fill our hearts with true humility. Make us cherish, fearless, honesty”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Requesting), (Asserting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Expressive)

Perlocution: Here, the omnipotent God is soberly being requested to fill the heart of Ghanaian citizens with true humility and also help them cherish fearless honesty.

Context

Situational Context: As a plea and request to the Almighty God, the speaker wants Him to fill the hearts of Ghanaians with true humility as they fight against colonialism and dispossession. At the same time, the request is also being made to God to make all Ghanaians cherish fearless honesty as it is only through honesty and uprightness that the freedoms and greatness of the country will be assured.

Mental Context: Here, the speaker is of the view that to fight for freedom and the rights of the people, the hearts of the citizens need to be filled with true humility, honesty and fearlessness otherwise the country is capable of surrendering to any oppressions.

Implicature: These two lines are pregnant with patriotic elements. A fight for a country's rights and freedoms needs fearless and honest men/women. Independence does not come without a cost, therefore, commitment, determination and courage is a must.

Presupposition: There is a supreme God who is capable of making Ghanaians strong, humble and honest and equally capable of making them remain in perpetual fear, dishonesty and eventually in bondage.

Lines 7 & 8: "And help us to resist oppressors' rule, with all our will and might forever more"

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Requesting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Promising)

Perlocution: The effect of line 7 & 8 of the Ghana national anthem is that God the omniscient, will help Ghanaians to collectively and wholeheartedly resist 'oppressors' rule forever.

“Oppressors” here, refers to the British colonial masters and anyone/anything which may threaten the independence and growth of Ghana. The effect is to aspire to attend lofty heights and become a strong and happy nation.

Context

Situational Context: In this particular situation, the speaker who represents Ghana is encouraging all citizens to rise to the occasion and resist any more attempts on recolonizing Ghana and reject all negative effects colonization brought.

Mental Context: The mentality of the speaker is that Ghanaian citizens have been oppressed for a long time in the guise of colonialism and so, requesting God to help Ghanaians to fiercely resist the oppression, intimidation and all negative effects of colonialism.

Implicature: There is more to communication in lines 7 & 8 than they appear. The lexical items speak volume and are indeed a cry in bitterness and agony over the British rule. After gaining independence in 1957, there is a strong need to reject any form of oppression from the colonial masters to be completely a free nation. The wordings have implication towards neo-colonialism which wordings of the anthem vehemently reject and denounce, and charge the citizenry to fight against it.

Presupposition: This presupposes that in the face of oppressions against Ghana, there exist an all-powerful God who can help fight and rescue Ghana against the oppressors and dictatorship always.

(b) Stanza Two

Line 1 & 2: “Hail to thy name, O Ghana, to thee we make our solemn vow;”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Commissive (Praising)

Indirect Illocution: Declarative (Vowing)

Perlocution: The effect is that Ghana is the only country the people have hence, they praise and ‘vow’ to defend it no matter the situation.

Context

Situational Context: Culture requires that the people of Ghana defend and protect land and be proud of the heritage. So, Ghana being a culture-bound nation, the people solemnly praise the entity, Ghana, and vow to protect it from any form of attacks and danger after independence.

Mental Context: Psychologically, the people feel that the country ‘Ghana’ is like a precious jewel they must hail. A further commitment is made by making a ‘solemn vow’ to defend the country against any form of dictatorship and deprivation.

Implicature: The lines violate the maxim of quality. One cannot measure the extent to which the citizens have vowed to always cherish the country. There is no empirical evidence on the kind of vow the speaker asserts. The struggle the people went through during colonialism is still fresh in their memories and must be fiercely resisted. The country Ghana has been personified as the speaker “hails thy name’

Presupposition: Here, there is a nation that is most cherished and loved and that is Ghana. The citizens praise that nation and pledge to stand by it.

Line 3 & 4: “Steadfast to build together, a nation strong in Unity;” These lines suggest that the people are committed to coming together and building a robust nation which is strong and united.

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directing (Plea), (Promising)

Indirect Illocution: No indirect Illocution

Perlocution: It is a request from the Almighty God to bring the nationals together to build a nation that is very strong and formidable.

Context

Situational Context: The people wanted the nation to be united and it is only God that can grant their request by providing them the required energy to fight and collectively rebuild the country.

Mental Context: The people sincerely believe in the capability of God to bring them together in their quest to building a robust and a united nation. The people also think that they must be unwavering in the fight otherwise they will lose it to the oppressors.

Implicature: The maxim of quantity is again, flouted here. There is more to being steadfast in building a robust and a united nation. Ghana is the only treasure God has bequeathed to Ghanaians and so, it is imperative to build it together for development through unwavering sacrifice.

Presupposition: These lines presuppose that the country can be weakened or disintegrated if the citizenry do not work in unity. The foregrounding of the word “Unity” showcases the importance of the word to the survival of the country – the greatness can only be possible through togetherness and harmony.

Lines 5 & 6: “With our gifts of mind and strength of arm, whether night or day, in mist or storm”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Urging)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Promising)

Perlocution: The citizenry remains committed to rebuilding a united nation with their God given talent and might at all costs – day, night, haze or tornado etc.

Context

Situational Context: Under the circumstance, Ghanaians have vowed to reject any form of oppression and dictatorship against

all odds as they take steps, in oneness, to build a formidable country by exploring their potential to the fullest.

Mental Context: The context here portrays the Christians' biblical injunction that whatever that God has bestowed onto man must be jealously guarded. The people are of the view that they do not have any other country except Ghana and therefore, have decided to dedicate all their energy to the support and building of the country.

Implicature: These lines are packed with lots of information and so, violate the maxim of quantity. The people are determined to exploit their prowess to build a strong nation.

Presupposition: The presupposition of these lines indicates that without stepping out of their comfort zone and doing the odds, the nation may not be built and incidentally may not be united and strong as expected.

Lines 7 & 8: "In every need whate'er the call may be, to serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore."

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Promising)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Pledging)

Perlocution: Reflecting on the preceding lines, the people through a solemn prayer pledge to do everything within their capacity to respond to the urgent call to serve their country, Ghana at all time – "now and evermore".

Context

Situational Context: Since nationals do not have any other home other than Ghana, they would relentlessly dedication all their time and energy in its building and that, they know, requires sacrifice and endurance.

Mental Context: The people are of the opinion that there is a country they must diligently serve and that is Ghana. After attaining independence from the colonial rulers, the people think

that task before them to maintain and retain their rights and freedom is hard-work. Therefore, they need all their might to yield to the call 'now' to defend their country. This is done by requesting God's enablement in order to accomplish this important task.

Implicature: This flouts the maxim of manner where an expression should be devoid of obscurity and any form of ambiguity. The use of the phrase, "to serve thee" may be referring to God the Almighty or the country Ghana. The Middle English word 'thee' has been repeated in line 2 of stanza 2 earlier to point to Ghana as a country. Again, the use of the contraction "whate'er" (whatever) also violates the maxim of relation. It communicates a sense of "informality" but one can easily note the rhythmic and musical undertone it connotes and this is not surprising as anthems are written to be sung.

Presupposition: These stanzas buttress the idiom: easy come, easy go. Since independence of Ghana did not come easily, it presupposes that it cannot go easily as people of Ghana would do whatever it takes to keep it. Therefore, through toil and moil, Ghana will retain her independence and greatness.

(c) Stanza Three

Lines 1 & 2: "Raise high the flag of Ghana, and one with Africa advance;"

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Requesting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Challenging)

Perlocution: The effect is for citizens uphold Ghana and Ghanaian culture and heritage which in turn will project Africans and Africa as a continent.

Context

Situational Context: Ghana is an integral part of Africa, so, Ghana's greatness is synonymous to Africa's greatness. Thus, the

development of Ghana/African continent must be embraced by all Ghanaians/Africans.

Mental Context: There is shared knowledge among Africans that steps schemed towards protecting Ghana against any form of enslavement and deprivation must be applied to the African continent else, colonialism will continue to fester in African countries. This is because many African countries were colonised almost at the same period by the same Europeans and the fight for independence swept across all countries in Africa as well. Many African leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Julius Nyerere fought for independence together and eventually gained their freedom from the Europeans. Therefore, it behoves on all Africans to unite and resist any more attempt by the Europeans to recolonize African countries.

Implicature: These lines violate the maxim of quantity and manner by packing a lot of information in them. Citizens are not required to physically “raise high” the Ghanaian/African flags. The flag here is metaphoric which symbolizes the pride of being a Ghanaian/African and joy in promoting and projecting African culture, African identity and African belief system. As a proud nation with a common vision, Ghanaians should be selfless and patriotic.

Presupposition: There exists an African continent where its people are requested to unite for accelerated growth and development having been freed from bondage and oppression in the hands of our colonial masters.

Lines 3 & 4: “Black star of hope and honour, to all who thirst for liberty;”

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Assertive (stating), (claiming)

Indirect Illocution: Declarative (proclaiming)

Perlocution: The effect is that the Black Star in the Ghana Flag symbolizes hope and honour of all people who are very thirsty for liberty.

Context

Situational Context: The Ghanaian identity is the Black Star which symbolises dignity and showcases being one of the earliest countries in African to regain independence. This naturally inspires hope and pride to the Ghana nation and serves as a mark of loftiness.

Mental Context: Psychologically, Ghanaians identify with the national flag and wherever it is hoisted, citizens are filled with bliss, hope and honour for their future. Usually, stars are shiny and are “bright/white” in colour, but this star being black symbolizes Africans who are predominantly black. The Black Star connects Ghana to the rest of the African continent where Africans see Ghana as a harbinger of hope and pride.

Implicature: Liberty is a right bequeathed to every individual by God and so, Ghanaians who seek liberty, honour and dignity, derives inspiration from the Black Star. The colour of many Africans is black and identifies Africans to the rest of the world.

Presupposition: The lines presuppose that there is a nation, Ghana and a continent, Africa which symbolized hope, honour and dignity through the Black Star.

Lines 5 & 6: “Where the banner of Ghana freely flies, May the way to freedom truly lie” This is a plea to the Almighty God to provide direction/path that would sustain Ghana’s freedom and liberty.

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directing (Requesting) (Plea)

Indirect Illocution: There is no indirect Illocution

Perlocution: The effect is to see that God answers Ghanaian’s prayers and keep the country in the right direction.

Context

Situational Context: The speaker is requesting God to truly let the path to freedom lie wherever the flag of Ghana flies freely. In this situation, wherever the Ghana flag is hoisted, freedom and liberty is also obtained.

Mental Context: As a symbol of hope and honour, it is the prayer and wish of the citizenry that God will let the way to freedom truly lie by raising the national flag of Ghana.

Implicature: There is no time indicated to grant freedom for all Ghanaians but anywhere the banner which symbolizes the flag of Ghana is hoisted, freedom from oppression and deprivation will flourish. The flag of Ghana signifies the toil of the forefathers who fought for the liberation of Ghana as well as the agricultural and mineral resources Ghana is endowed with. Therefore, the flag flying anywhere indicates freedom from bondage under colonial rule.

Presupposition: The national flag represents the country and also a mark of the national character. It signifies the rich cultural heritage of the people and is revered by its citizens. It is the conviction of the citizenry that anywhere the flag is made to fly freedom is in the air, therefore, indicates the path to hope and life.

Lines 7 & 8: “Arise, arise O sons of Ghanaland, And under God march on for evermore.”

This shows that there is a group of people who are so passionate for a cause of action to be addressed as ‘sons of Ghanaland’. The use of the expression ‘O sons of Ghanaland’ is a direct address to the patriotic citizens of Ghana to heed this all-important call.

Speech Act

Direct Illocution: Directive (Requesting)

Indirect Illocution: Commissive (Challenging)

Perlocution: The effect is to see citizens who are dedicated ‘sons of Ghanaland’ rising and marching relentlessly for a just cause under the guidance of God.

Context

Situational Context: Here, Ghana is being personified as the speaker while the sons (every Ghanaian) are the listeners who under the protection of God, march on forever. Here, all patriotic and dutiful sons of the country are being addressed.

Mental Context: It is assumed that there is some work to be done by the patriotic sons of Ghanaland. The assumed speaker (Ghana) therefore, seeks to call on the people of nation to be alert for the work that is yet to be executed.

Implicature: The lines violate the maxim of quantity. The repetition of the word “Arise” suggests that the “sons of Ghanaland” are sleeping, relaxing, tired or unaware of an obligation ahead of them. They are called upon to wake up and march in perpetuity. Therefore, the repeated call is a challenge to rise as patriotic sons to take up a worthy responsibility: defending and protecting Ghanaland, the homeland of Ghanaians.

Presupposition: The lines presuppose that there are sons of Ghana who are capable of responding to a call. This call could not have been made to non-humans, except for literary effects. It is a call to a patriotic group of people who have the capability of responding to an emergency.

7.0 Discussion

The words and lines in the Ghana national anthem have carefully been put into three stanzas. The first stanza signifies a new beginning from colonialism; the second stanza stands for a new beginning for the present Ghana land; while the last 8 lines connote a new beginning for the future of Ghana. Thus, the past, the present and the future are captured by the physical arrangement of the national anthem.

The Ghana National Anthem is a strong call on all well-meaning patriotic Ghanaians towards the growth and development of Ghana and to fight against any oppressors – the colonial masters, any Ghanaians and/or any other nationals who may want to plot against the sovereignty of Ghana state, corruption, dictatorship etc. – with all their will and might. Again, this call is to induce love, hope, strength and faith in the minds of Ghanaians and for them to see their freedom and liberation as a must-have which will in turn help them to sustain the fight forever. The anthem further calls on all Ghanaians to be steadfast and committed to building a strong and resilient nation with their God-given talents and wisdom irrespective of the circumstances. The third stanza reinforces a struggle for the future of Ghana and the African continent at large. It enjoins all citizens to regard Black as a symbol of strength, dignity, hope and honour and be proud to be Africans. Ghana being a God-believing country showcases the anthem hinged on God the Almighty for all achievements, success and progress and therefore constantly reminds all Ghanaians to be prayerful. Through dedicated prayer, the country hopes to attain greater heights as its sons rise from their slumber to render efficient and diligent services to the homeland, Ghana.

8.0 Conclusion

The Ghana national anthem is tailored towards the need to instil love, honesty and faith to Ghanaians towards building the country. The kind of country that is being envisaged is one where greatness and resilience shall reign forever through constantly defending and protecting the cherished freedom and liberty the country has attended. The anthem recognises Black Star as a symbol of dignity, strength, honour, hope and greatness and employs all citizenry to protect the territories of Ghana as that is the only inheritance they have.

The last two lines of the Anthem pragmatically address the lackadaisical or negative attitude some Ghanaians have towards Ghana and employ them to rise to this urgent call and serve the homeland, Ghana fearlessly.

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